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BISHOP BLOMFIELD.*

DR. BLOMFIELD entered on the duties of the episcopate with a great preponderance of circumstances in his favour. There were at that time few men on the Bench of Bishops possessed of any considerable force of character, and not a greater number gifted with the talent (rarely found in any high degree amongst the clergy) for public business. His predecessor, Dr. Law, had slumbered at Chester, as he afterwards more pitiably slumbered at Bath. But ominous times were approaching, and the Church needed spiritual overseers of a higher order than the Pelhams, Howleys, Van Milderts and Laws, whom the last Georges delighted to honour. There was ample opportunity for a Bishop of vigorous intellect and earnest spirit to gain for himself a place of honour in the annals of the Church.

He had, on the other hand, some disadvantages, both those common to his order and some personal to himself. "A Bishop," it has been recently remarked, "is often a person much to be pitied. He seldom sees things or men as they are. Unless he is a man of strong mind and good sense, he is sure to fall into some mischievous hands. Flatterers and toadies buzz round the episcopal palace like flies round a grocer's shop in summer. Not being generally born to dignity, a Bishop seldom hits that happy mean in which he can at once be authoritative and courteous, and can reconcile rule with policy." He had not acquired perfect mastery over a temper constitutionally irritable. We remember hearing from an eye-witness that the first time the new Bishop drove out in his proper costume to make the customary calls of acknowledgment on the Premier and others of the King's Ministers, his carriage was detained by a *block* of some minutes' duration in Cheapside. With his sense of the value of time, he impatiently put his head out of his carriage, and with his customary and energetic tones directed his coachman to get on. The surprise and amusement of the bystanders made him aware how conspicuous he was, and he devolved on a lay companion the duty of giving the required directions or rebukes.

The energy of the new Bishop struck the poor curates and incumbents of his diocese with something like a panic. Those

* Concluded from p. 402.

of them who had ventured to introduce unauthorized hymn-books and other novelties into their churches were doomed to listen to censures more stern than agreeable. A humble vicar near Chester, who had neglected to bring his hymn-book for inspection, was rebuked before the neighbouring clergy with a severity that would have befitted a serious moral offence. Sometimes the Bishop in his inexperience went beyond the rubrics in his directions and rebukes. On one occasion the celebrated and popular Rector of Alderley (afterwards Bishop of Norwich) withstood him in the face of the clergy and others in Chester cathedral, and successfully vindicated his right to bring up for confirmation a catechumen whom the Bishop would have put aside as too young. A strong feeling was beginning to arise that Dr. Blomfield had too much of a schoolmaster's rigour and too little of the suavity of a Christian Bishop. On the other hand, he won golden opinions by his assiduity, ready and impressive utterance, and sound judgment in conducting public charities and other secular matters that required his aid. At the periodical board meetings at the Infirmary he often presided, and by his authority and tact kept in abeyance petty disputes springing from personal and professional jealousies and strifes. We well remember his skilful and successful speech on the occasion of a meeting of the citizens at the Town Hall to prepare an address to the Throne of condolence on the death of the Duke of York. The Duke's violent advocacy of the anti-catholic policy of the Tory party made the duty of moving the address, which devolved on the Bishop, one of considerable delicacy. There was a large attendance of the Liberal party, headed by the late Mr. Joseph Swanwick, who deservedly possessed the ear and confidence of his fellow-citizens. An exaggerated epithet, a misplaced phrase in the Bishop's panegyric on the Duke, might have provoked an amendment and an angry debate; but so delicately did the mover of the address pick his way through many pitfalls, that the vote was unanimous and hearty.

The picture which the biographer gives of clerical education and the tone of clerical society in Cheshire forty years ago is more faithful than pleasing. Secular pursuits distracted the attention of some of the clergy from their proper duties. One clergyman was postmaster, another was an agent for a large business, another was candidate for the mayoralty in a borough town. The candidates for ordination were often ill instructed. Of the wealthy clergy, fox-hunting was the favourite pastime, "an amusement which was then almost a religion in Cheshire." In a letter of remonstrance on this subject to a young man seeking curate's orders, the Bishop remarked that the Church of England was the only one in Christendom "the ministers of which would think of defending such a practice."

"In speaking or writing on the subject of clerical duties, the Bishop

would sometimes convey his admonitions with a certain sharpness of manner, which concealed the real kindness of his heart; nor was he careful to make that difference which the Cheshire clergy expected, in his treatment of the mere curate, of narrow means and no position, and of the independent squire-parson of good family. When some one remarked that his portrait, painted soon after he became a Bishop, represented him with a decided frown, 'Yes,' he replied, 'that portrait ought to have been dedicated, without permission, to the non-resident clergy of the diocese of Chester.'

"He used to tell a story of one clergyman, whom he had reproved for certain irregularities of conduct which had been brought to his notice by his parishioners, and who had replied, 'Your Lordship, as a classical scholar, knows that lying goes by districts; the Cretans were liars, the Cappadocians were liars; and I can assure you that the inhabitants of — are liars too.' Intoxication was the most frequent charge against the clergy. One was so drunk while waiting for a funeral, that he fell into the grave; another was conveyed away from a visitation dinner in a helpless state by the Bishop's own servants. A third, when rebuked for drunkenness, replied, 'But, my Lord, I never was drunk on duty.' 'On duty!' exclaimed the Bishop; 'when is a clergyman not on duty?' 'True,' said the other, 'I never thought of that.'"—I. 104, 105.

Bishop Blomfield took from the first a conspicuous place as a debater in the House of Lords. Bishop Copleston described him as one of the best speakers he ever heard, "ready, fluent, correct, always addressing himself to the point, never seeking admiration by sarcasm and ornament and rhetorical flourish." The severe, not to say intolerant, taste of the English Parliament necessarily excludes all flights of imagination and rhetoric. Where these are shut out, whatever may be the merits of the prevalent oratory, it cannot attain to eloquence of the highest range.

The first speech uttered by the Bishop was unpremeditated, and was spoken in reply to Lord Holland, who had criticised some clerical petitions against the Roman Catholic claims.

"No Bishop was prepared to answer the attacks of Lord Holland, so the Bishop of Chester rose on the spur of the moment, and, as he said himself afterwards, had finished his speech before he had time to reflect that he was addressing for the first time the most dignified assembly in the world. Several peers congratulated him on his speech; and Lord Holland himself generously crossed the House, and offering him his hand, predicted his future success as a debater."—I. 127.

Somewhat different was the treatment he received soon after, as will presently appear, from the hands of Lord Eldon.

The illness of Lord Liverpool in 1827 broke up the compact Tory party which had so long administered the government, and, concurrently with various influences both of home and foreign growth, led to rapid and astounding political changes. The formation of the government of the Duke of Wellington followed. Lord Eldon was succeeded in the custody of the Great Seal by

Lord Lyndhurst. This remarkable incident was rather a symptom of the great change which had taken place in the political feeling of the country, than a cause of the new and liberal policy which was soon after adopted. The unexpected success obtained by Lord John Russell in the House of Commons, Feb. 26, 1828, when a motion for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts was carried in a full House by a majority of 44, led to the reversal of that policy, either of absolute exclusion or partial toleration of Dissenters, which had since the Restoration prevailed. The acquiescence of the Duke's government in their defeat, and the consequent repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, filled Lord Eldon and those who thought with him with serious alarm. He recalled with a sigh the palmy days for high Tories in the last century, when debates in Parliament were enlivened by silly stories of Dr. Priestley's being prepared with a train of gunpowder to blow up the Church, or of Dr. Price's glowing anticipations of its separation from the State, and when huge majorities were always in favour of a ministerial and exclusive measure. He looked on the Bill to which the government of 1828 gave its sanction as one of a revolutionary character, and denounced the Ministers for having induced the Archbishops and most of the Bishops not only to abstain from opposition, but to give the measure their actual support. It was becoming manifest that storms and breakers were ahead; the then rulers of the Church of England became alarmed. Notwithstanding some appearances to the contrary, Bishop Blomfield was not a courageous man, and he fought at first under ecclesiastical chiefs more naturally timid than himself. It would be uncandid to withhold from the Bench of Bishops in 1828 the praise of a sincere desire to free religion from the indecent prostitution of the Lord's Supper to mere civil and official purposes. Some of them were also actuated by a respect for the principles of religious liberty. But the speeches of Bishop Blomfield, when the repeal of the Corporation and Test Act was debated in the Lords, deprive him of any right to praise in this particular. He vindicated the original imposition of the test as a necessity on the part of the Church, and he argued that the State would be at all times justified in passing any measures of the kind necessary for the safety of the Church. But the practical working of the annual Act of Indemnity satisfied him that the Church could now safely dispense with the securities of the Corporation and Test Act, and so he would let them go. This was a very narrow ground for a statesman, but it was just the ground on which he acted throughout. With a slightly different state of things, the Bishop would have justified a conclusion totally different from that at which he arrived. Under such circumstances, silence would have been the safer course for a Churchman; but what Sydney Smith called Bishop Blomfield's "ungovernable passion for business" forced him into

the fray, and he did not always escape unbruised. When Lord Eldon proposed an amendment continuing the sacramental test on the part of Churchmen and others who made no objection to it, Bishop Blomfield criticised his consistency, and blamed him for attempting to carry out two principles of a totally different kind. The old Lord, now careless where his blows fell, and forgetting all his wonted veneration for men sitting in lawn sleeves, said with some bluntness, "I must take the liberty of observing that I think the Right Rev. Prelate would be better employed in attending to his own consistency of conduct than in talking about that of others. I am sure I have been at least as consistent as the Rev. Prelate on the present subject of discussion, and I will take care to remain so to the last." The ex-Chancellor then sarcastically alluded to the probability of the Bishop's being promoted to a certain high and permanent station, and to the possibility of his being then subjected to the use of the declaration which the Repeal Bill contained. The Bishop rejoined that there was no foundation of fact in the hypothesis, that the suggestion of it was unfair, and advised the learned Lord to found his arguments hereafter on a basis tangible and more to the purpose. The old Lord, little accustomed to be publicly schooled and by a Bishop, said in reply, "I request the Rev. Prelate will abstain from giving his advice where he is not asked for it, as I can assure him I am not likely to follow his admonitions, at least in the present case." Later on in the discussion, the Bishop tried to soothe the irritated law Lord by disclaiming intentional disrespect towards one who had bestowed on the Church "a long series of the most valuable services." But it is understood that Lord Eldon never forgave the Bishops, for whose conduct in the matter he said it was impossible to offer a rational account. He supposed that they feared that if they opposed the concessions to Dissenters, something worse would happen. It was the old Lord's dogged conviction that in State matters fear and timidity produce the evils dreaded.

It was in a speech on the Test Repeal Bill that Bishop Blomfield indulged in an intemperate denunciation on University College, London (then called the London University), as a device of infidelity not merely to withdraw the education of the young from the hands of the clergy, but also to exclude Christianity from its rightful province and to obliterate its very name from the cycle of useful knowledge. The Bishop would have scarcely committed this wanton indiscretion had Lord Brougham, the great patron of the new University, then occupied the seat to which he was afterwards called in the Upper House.

The Bishop more wisely sought the practical promotion of his views of the education of the middle class in the metropolis, by helping to establish King's College, the distinctive principle of which, in contrast to University College, was, that religion was

to be an essential part of the instruction given; that the professors should be, if not clergymen, Churchmen; and that the only religion taught should be that of the Church of England. Concessions to the spirit of the age were, however, made by the founders of King's College in admitting Dissenters who chose to resort to the institution without any test or enforced religious observances. Whether these concessions were quite in accordance with some of the founders' asserted principles may perhaps be doubted. So thoroughly had the Bishop by this time moulded his opinions to what he was accustomed to call "sound Church principles," that he looked on institutions in which conformity to the Church was not provided for as fraught with considerable danger. He said that it was "morally impossible to give religious instruction which shall not have a tendency either to promote or to weaken the interests of the Church." If any eminent Nonconformist minister had uttered the same thought in relation to Dissent, what an outcry would have been raised against the narrowness of sectarianism and its inability to perceive that common Christianity which, as embracing all believers, is the bond of union to the true catholic church!

The translation to which Lord Eldon sarcastically alluded (April 21, 1828) as probable, referred to Canterbury. But the Bishop's translation to London was actually impending. When, shortly after, Archbishop Sutton died, Dr. Howley became Primate and Dr. Blomfield succeeded to London. His enthusiastic friends said he owed his preferment solely to his own "ascensive force of merit," but perhaps his merit would not have been so obvious to the Duke of Wellington had the Bishop's conscience led him to argue and vote against the government.

Of all English bishoprics, London is "the most important and onerous." It was especially so in 1829, when Dr. Blomfield was enthroned. Dr. Howley's amiable but timid nature left a large arrear of necessary work to his successor; nothing had been done to bring up the institutions of the Church in the metropolitan county into proportion to the population, which had nearly doubled itself since the beginning of the century. The Church of England had fallen on evil days. The Roman Catholic question then, and soon afterwards that of Reform in Parliament, covered the ecclesiastical firmament with dark and threatening clouds. The difficulties of the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel in carrying the Catholic Relief Bill were principally enhanced by the unwillingness of the King and the opposition of the Bishops. Several unsuccessful efforts were made by the Duke to bring over the latter to his views. The new Bishop of London declined to revert to his earlier and more liberal opinions, and recorded his vote with the minority who opposed the Bill.

One of the Bishop's first efforts was to introduce into the habits of the higher classes of society a stricter observance of

the Sabbath. Departing from the line of persuasion, he fell into that of denunciation, and aroused the bitter opposition of the press by infelicitously speaking of it as a "pander to the Athenian curiosity of the age."

The death, unlamented by all classes, of George IV. made way for the sailor King, William IV. At the first interview of the Bishop with him, the King bluntly expressed his disapprobation of the other's opposition to the Catholic Bill. The Bishop pleaded conscience, and passed so well through a rather trying scene, that the King's feelings underwent a rapid change, and became very favourable to the Bishop.

Next came the trying season of the agitation for the Reform Bill. The Bishop of London here evinced the essential timidity of his nature by absenting himself on the occasion of the division, when the Lords threw out the Bill by a majority of 41, of whom 21 were Bishops. He alleged the recent death of his father as the occasion of his absence. When in the following session the Reform Bill was again introduced, Bishop Blomfield both spoke and voted for it.

When the Reform tide had set in in all its strength, it was impossible to prevent the waters from reaching the Church. Bishop Blomfield exerted himself so to divert the tide as to save all that could be saved. He became prominently a Church Reformer. His biographer strives, with natural filial piety, to make out the best case for the Bishop, and pleads that he was a reformer upon principle and irrespective of the times in which he exercised episcopal functions. But this plea can be accepted only with large reservations. He would in any circumstances have done what in him lay to restrain clerical improprieties and raise the standard of clerical learning and character; he would have cheerfully carried into effect any plan for increasing the power of the Establishment by enhancing the effectiveness of clerical labour; but that in times of peace and tranquillity he would have been the man to introduce any large measure of reform affecting the revenues of the Church or crippling the influence of the clergy, we may well doubt. If we look to the Charge delivered to his clergy at his primary visitation in 1830, we find but few things out of the ordinary beat of episcopal talk, such as the infidel spirit of the age, the importance of clerical residence and the careful performance of the offices of the Church, the experiment of daily "matins," national and infant schools, catechising, and an elevated standard of ministerial qualifications.

"In speaking of residence, the Bishop had his eye more particularly on the Essex incumbents, many of whom had licences of non-residence on account of the alleged unhealthiness of the district, and left their duties to be performed by curates. On some less formal occasion, he reminded the clergy that curates were, after all, of the same flesh and blood as rectors, and that the residence which was possible for the one,

could not be quite impossible for the other. 'Besides,' added he, 'there are two well-known preservatives against ague; the one is, a good deal of care and a little port wine; the other, a little care and a good deal of port wine. I prefer the former; but if any of the clergy prefer the latter, it is at all events a remedy which incumbents can afford better than curates.'—I. 161.

In his second Charge, in 1834, while eagerly defending the Church from the attacks of those whom the biographer styles "the more rancorous Nonconformists," he maintained that the Church had a just claim to her endowments, which he argued were not excessively large, nay were inadequate to the purposes for which they were intended; and he dropped a few words which, interpreted by the event, shewed that he had made up his mind to the reduction of the cathedral establishments. As early as 1831, a Commission had been appointed to inquire into the revenues and patronage of the Established Church, and to which Bishop Blomfield belonged. It was renewed in 1833 and 1834, and in 1835 it presented its report to Parliament. It was in 1836 that the Ecclesiastical Commission was appointed (which still continues to exist), over which for several years our Bishop exercised a most potent sway. "We never," said the then Archbishop of York (Vernon Harcourt), speaking of the proceedings of the Commission, "do anything more than nib our pens till the Bishop of London comes."

The doings of this Commission, for which the Bishop is justly responsible, have been criticised in many quarters with severity, and have received, and in truth deserved, little praise from any class of critics. A Tory writer, looking back from these conservative days, so pleasant to Churchmen, on the beginning of the Bishop's London episcopate, makes the remark, "From 1829 to 1835, no man committed more mistakes than Charles James, by Divine permission Lord Bishop of London." The critic whom the Bishop most dreaded was Sydney Smith, who was stimulated by personal interest to resist and denounce the plans of reform recommended by the Ecclesiastical Commission. With much caustic wit he exposed the partiality of their plans, which, while ruthlessly dealing with the rights of Deans and Chapters, were to the last degree tender towards the privileges and profits of Bishops. Some of his personal attacks on the Bishop were sufficiently stinging. After quoting old Hermann's judgment on Blomfield's *Æschylus*, he continues: "*Here it is qualis ab incepto.* He begins with *Æschylus* and ends with the Church of England; begins with profane and ends with holy innovations; scratching out old readings which every commentator had sanctioned; abolishing ecclesiastical dignities which every reformer had spared; thrusting an anapæst into a verse, which will not bear it; and intruding a Canon into a Cathedral, which does not want it; and this is the Prelate by whom the proposed reform

of the Church has been principally planned, and to whose practical wisdom the Legislature is called upon to defer. The Bishop of London is a man of very great ability, humane, placable, generous, munificent, very agreeable, but not to be trusted with great interests where calmness and judgment are required."

"The Bishop of London is passionately fond of labour, has certainly no aversion to power, is of quick temper, great ability, thoroughly versant in ecclesiastical law, and always in London. He will become the Commission, and when the Church of England is mentioned, it will only mean *Charles James of London*, who will enjoy a greater power than has ever been possessed by any Churchman since the days of Laud, and will become *the Church of England here upon earth*."

"The Bishop of London affects short sharp sayings, seasoned sometimes, I am afraid, with a little indiscretion."

The biographer gives us a panegyric on what the Ecclesiastical Commission effected in "the more palmy and promising days" when it was wielded by his father. But from his praises a very large discount must be taken off when the subject is looked at in all its bearings. It has unquestionably done much good to the Church of England, but at a prodigal cost. Since it was established, its receipts have been £2,879,170. But the office expenditure in that time has been £492,524. 12s. 10d., i. e. more than 17 per cent. Of the huge amount distributed by the Commissioners, not one half has been devoted to spiritual destitution; the larger moiety has gone to building bishops' palaces, endowing bishoprics, and in handsome salaries to secretaries, solicitors, architects and surveyors. The last Report of the Ecclesiastical Commission, recently issued, with its forty-two pages of balance-sheets, justifies what Sydney Smith wrote in his first Letter to Archdeacon Singleton: "I give sincere credit to the Commissioners for good intentions—how can such men have intended anything but good? And I firmly believe that they are hardly conscious of the extraordinary predilection they have shewn for Bishops in all their proceedings; it is like those errors in tradesmen's bills, of which the retail arithmetician is really unconscious, but which somehow or another always happen to be in his own favour. Such men as the Commissioners do not say, This patronage belongs justly to the Cathedrals, and we will take it away unjustly for ourselves; but, after the manner of human nature, a thousand weak reasons prevail, which would have no effect if self-interest were not concerned; they are practising a deception on themselves, and sincerely believe they are doing right." Sydney Smith admitted that the Bishop of London was far from being a sordid man, but he regarded him as one who was habitually influenced by the *esprit de corps*, by which most men are influenced.

It was creditable both to the Bishop's prudence and temper

that, notwithstanding the witty Canon's attacks on him, the intercourse of the two was in the mean time friendly in its character. But he complained that the other, a dignitary and beneficed clergyman, allowed his exuberant wit to overflow "upon the Church." He had the good sense, however, to utter such complaints only in private and to friends. Bishop Monk less discreetly reviled the Canon as a scoffer and a jester, and brought down upon him this witty rejoinder: "There is nothing pompous gentlemen are so much afraid of as a little humour. It is like the objection of certain cephalic animalculæ to the use of small-tooth combs. 'Finger and thumb, precipitate powder, or anything else you please, but for heaven's sake no small-tooth combs!'" But let us thank the biographer for good stories like these:

"A saying of Sydney Smith's has been preserved, humorously illustrative of the view which he took of Bishop Blomfield's character. The Bishop had been bitten by a dog in the calf of the leg, and, fearing possible hydrophobia in consequence, he went, with characteristic promptitude, to have the injured piece of flesh cut out by a surgeon before he returned home. Two or three on whom he called were not at home; but, at last, the operation was effected by the eminent surgeon, Mr. Keate. The same evening the Bishop was to have dined with a party where Sydney Smith was a guest. Just before dinner, a note arrived, saying that he was unable to keep his engagement, a dog having rushed out from the crowd and bitten him in the leg. When this note was read aloud to the company, Sydney Smith's comment was, '*I should like to hear the dog's account of the story.*'"

"When this accident occurred to him, Bishop Blomfield happened to be walking with Dr. D'Oyly, the Rector of Lambeth. A lady of strong Protestant principles, mistaking Dr. *D'Oyly* for Dr. *Doyle*, said that she considered it was a judgment upon the Bishop for keeping such company.

"In writing to a friend of the Bishop's, Sydney Smith once said, 'The only fault I find with the Bishop of London is, that he does not ask me to dinner.' It is remembered that when he *was* invited, he proved less amusing than had been expected. Perhaps he was experiencing that comparative degree of nervousness which he once described: 'When I am afraid of my neighbour at dinner, I always crumble my bread; I crumble my bread a good deal when I sit next the Bishop of London; but when I sit next the Archbishop of Canterbury, I crumble my bread with both hands.'

"To one who had so much humour of his own as Bishop Blomfield, the humour of Sydney Smith could not fail to be a source of great delight and amusement. He used to relate, with especial glee, his saying, when the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's were discussing the plan of a wooden pavement round the cathedral, that they had only got to *lay their heads together*, and the thing would be done at once."—I. 220, 221.

If Sydney Smith proved less amusing than he ought to have been at the Bishop's table, it need not surprise any one. Wit, like some of the choicer delicacies of the table, is easily chilled,

and the cold and suspicious eye of his host would not merely chill but freeze the jocund spirit generally so fearless.

When the passion for rubrical severity of discipline and a servile imitation of the forms of the Church of Rome was introduced into the Church of England by the Tractarian party, the Bishop of London, sympathizing with them in their zeal for discipline and for a strict interpretation of the articles and creeds, stirred up a fierce controversy in the Church by the expression of his opinions in his Charge delivered in 1842. The Archbishop of Canterbury found it necessary to step out of his habitual state of cautious reserve and pronounce opinions not in agreement with those of his successor in the see of London. The Bishop bowed to the judgment of his superior, only too happy to terminate in this way the miserable controversy which he had rashly stirred up. On this part of his life the Tory critic to whom reference has been already made thus speaks: "In the miserable disputes about forms and ceremonies—the putting up of crosses in churches, the ornamentation of altars with flowers, and the preaching in surplices instead of black gowns—the Bishop got inextricably involved; and he further managed by his attempt to conciliate all parties to satisfy none. His famous Charge, in which he recommended that candles should be placed upon the altar but never lighted, and that preachers should wear the surplice in the morning and the black gown in the evening, excited universal derision, and led to scenes between him and large bodies of his clergy of which it is not worth while to revive the recollection. These wretched disputes, with the consequences to which they led, caused him extreme annoyance, and the annoyance arising out of them seriously affected his health. He lacked moral courage to hold out; his natural timidity rendered him unequal to the contest which his own rashness had provoked."

The brightest gem in Bishop Blomfield's episcopal character was his energetic and munificent zeal in promoting the building of new churches in London. He succeeded in erecting and endowing no less than ten in the previously neglected parish of St. Matthew, Bethnal Green. The work of civilization carried on by the agency of the new clergymen and their lay associates was significantly marked by two facts. When the foundation of the first church was laid, the clergy and others engaged were received by the rude inhabitants of the district with scoffs and jeers, and a wild bull was let loose to throw all into confusion. When the same ceremony had to be performed for the ninth church, the procession passed through an orderly and well-dressed crowd of persons interested in the event of the day, the majority of whom took off their hats as the clergy passed them. The Metropolis Churches Fund, which the Bishop established, was the means of raising £266,000. The administration of this Fund in eighteen years cost less than 2 per cent., a fact which contrasts significantly

with the 17 per cent. expenditure for management by the Ecclesiastical Commission, and shews how much more expensively the State works than individual and voluntary agency.

“Bishop Blomfield’s own contributions to the work of church building in London were characteristically munificent. From 1836 to 1854 he contributed £6200 to the Metropolis Churches Fund; £1000 to the Westminster Spiritual Aid Fund; the same for a church in St. James’s, Westminster; £2000 for churches in Paddington; £750 to the Bethnal Green Churches Fund; besides building and endowing a church at a cost of about £7000 in Hammersmith, and besides his contributions to individual churches, seldom less than £50 to each, and in some cases as much as £200.”—I. 251.

Little praise can be given to the Bishop for liberality in relaxing the fetters with which legislation, the universities or the courts of law, had bound the expression of theological opinion. Of religious liberty in the abstract he had no clear conception. In practice he was often more liberal than in theory. He opposed the Jew Bill in the House of Lords, but he facilitated the education of poor Jewish children in his parish of St. Botolph’s.

When, in 1844, Lord Lyndhurst introduced in a masterly address of luminous exposition and powerful argument the Dissenters’ Chapels Bill, and moved the committal of it, the opposition was headed by the Bishop of London in a speech more remarkable for the fluency of its delivery than for the force of its arguments or the correctness of its statements. In an evil hour the Bishop had taken on trust the hostile statements he found in a violent pamphlet put out by an obscure barrister connected with the orthodox Dissenters, and in Mr. George Hadfield’s noted and mythical collection entitled “The Manchester Socinian Controversy.” But the Bishop fell into some strange blunders in using these imperfect authorities, which were afterwards pointed out in the notes added to the volume entitled “Parliamentary Debates on the Dissenters’ Chapels Bill.” One of the points taken up by the Bishop was an appeal from Lord Lyndhurst as a Legislator to Lord Lyndhurst as a Judge. Lord Brougham in reply shewed that none knew better than a Judge where the law worked hardly and unjustly, and that the Lord Chancellor having, in his judgment on the Hewley case, been compelled by the law to pronounce a decision the working of which he felt to be in some respects severely injurious to Unitarians, he was only fulfilling a higher duty in using his authority as a Legislator to improve the law. Another point taken by the Bishop was that the Bill designed to give the protection of law to that which was illegal,—that the profession of Unitarian opinions was not only heresy, but also a breach of the law and liable to punishment. On this point he was set right by Lord Campbell, who reminded him that the legal position of Unitarians in the profession of their opinions was entirely changed by the

passing in 1813 of the Trinity Bill, and that from that time they had stood on as secure a footing as other Dissenters. In corroboration of his view, Lord Campbell instanced the Marriage and Registration Acts, in which the Legislature had given protection and relief to Unitarians in common with other Nonconformists. He proceeded to deprecate the persecution of Unitarians, whom he styled "men of high honour, of great learning and the most active benevolence." Foiled at every point, the Bishop ceased his opposition for that evening and the Bill went into Committee. During the passage of the Bill through the two Houses of Parliament, it will be remembered that a fanatical opposition to it was organized by some of the orthodox Dissenters of England and Ireland, and the passions of the opponents rose to fever heat. The Bishop caught the contagion from the innumerable deputations of excited persons who waited on him and every Peer and Member of Parliament whom they could hope to influence. When, towards the close of the session, the Bill came back to the Lords with amendments made by the Commons, the Bishop essayed to destroy it by moving that the consideration of the amendments should be postponed. In a long and passionate speech, he denounced the Bill as one that contravened "the plainest dictates of reason" and was "opposed to the dictates of common sense." He argued against the Bill from the effect it would have in securing to the Unitarians continued possession of the pulpit and chapel built for Matthew Henry, forgetting that the trust-deed of that place simply described it as built "for the public worship of God by persons dissenting from the Church of England." Another argument used by the Bishop was, that if the Bill passed, and Unitarians were quieted in the possession of chapels built for the worship of God, Jews and Mohammedans might claim the protection of the Act, and that serious and embarrassing questions might come by way of appeal before the Lords, in which they would have to decide what was meant by the worship of God as expressed in the Bill. The Bishop ventured, in the face of the distinguished law Lords then opposed to him, to say that the view he had expressed was sanctioned by the opinion of some of the most eminent judges and lawyers of the day. But, as remarked by the editor of the Parliamentary Debates, "the unanimous decision of the Judges in the *Hewley* case, that Unitarian objects since the Act of 1813 were included in any general phrases which comprehended other Dissenters, had quite settled the very shallow and not new piece of sophistry" which the Bishop condescended to use. His speech was answered both by Lord Brougham and Lord Cottenham, and so little had his passionate harangue carried the House with him, that only 27 of the Lords then present supported him by their votes. Fourteen proxies were in the minority. The majority of both kinds numbered 202 votes. As a set-off against the deep morti-

fication of his Parliamentary failure, his biographer records the small consolations of the audible approbation during the delivery of the Bishop's speech of a Dissenting minister; a letter from Mr. Edward Bickersteth, thanking him for his resistance to the "fearful measure" of the Bill; and a letter from a Dissenting minister of Brighton, upon whose mind the Bishop's speech had let in a new political light, for now he and others were satisfied that the Bishops ought to retain their seats in Parliament. The division is wrongly stated as 100 against 27; but these numbers exclude the proxies, of which 102 were for and 14 against the Bill.

There was a previous occasion on which the Bishop of London had imported into a speech in the House of Lords very narrow and intolerant feelings. It was when a petition from certain clergymen asking for a modification of Subscription was warmly supported by Bishop Stanley on the ground that the Church of England was founded upon liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment, and also on the ground that he had never met with a single clergyman, though he had spoken with numberless individuals on the subject, who allowed that he agreed in every iota to the subscription which he took at ordination. With singular indiscretion and violence, Bishop Blomfield rebuked his brother Prelate for these observations, which he denounced as little less than a libel on the Church, and asserted that the Church was founded, not on liberty of conscience, but on *truth*, of which she was the authorized interpreter. Unmoved by this attack, and to separate himself from the implied ascription of infallibility to the Church, the Bishop of Norwich published his speech, with a preface and notes, in which he justified his opinions by the authority of eminent men in the Church. Among the authorities was that of Bishop Blomfield himself, who in his Charge in 1834 had spoken of various changes that might be adopted in the formularies and liturgy of the Church in a spirit quite in contrast with that of his speech. The Bishop of London wrote and printed a reply, but it was never published. His biographer suggests as his reason unwillingness to continue "a disagreement between brother Prelates." Another reason might be found in the timidity of the Bishop, and his perception that his speech was rash, and that his position in the controversy was inconvenient alike to himself and the Church.

We have not space to allude particularly to Bishop Blomfield's share in the discussions on popular education, but must content ourselves with the single criticism, that he viewed the subject exclusively as a Churchman, and was more quick in this matter to assert the rights than to enforce the duties of his Church.

He is entitled to much higher praise for the part he took in the reformation of the Poor-laws. As a member of the Poor-law Board, his practical knowledge of parochial matters and his

exact habits of business made him conspicuously useful, and it was he who carried through the House of Lords the Poor-law Amendment Act. It is probable that never were the duties of the episcopate more laboriously attended to than by Bishop Blomfield during the greater part of his occupancy of the see of London. It has been said that he usually gave eight hours a day to the administration of his diocese. Sydney Smith, in mentioning the fact, adds the remark, "The world is, I believe, taking one day with another, governed in about a third of the time." What data the modern Swift had for this observation does not appear. That his labours were too much for health and strength became apparent as he passed from middle life towards old age. He had a somewhat severe illness in 1836. In 1847, on the occasion of attending a meeting of the Privy Council at Osborne, and when walking through one of the passages, he slipped on the polished floor and fell, bruising his right temple. This might not be the cause, but it proved the occasion for the development, of a tendency towards paralysis. For some months he was prevented from attending to business, and was never in vigour of action (if in purpose) the man he had been. A severe cold, caught when attending the funeral in 1852 of the Duke of Wellington, brought on a painful affection of the eyes, and his eyesight was never afterwards properly restored. In 1855, he became an almost helpless paralytic. The necessities of his important diocese led to his proposal to resign his episcopal charge; but for such a step no precedent could be found. The knot was cut by the sharp process of an Act of Parliament, which gave also a similar relief to Bishop Maltby. A handsome income was assigned him, and Fulham as a residence. He also retained the Deanery of the Chapels Royal. It is unspeakably to Bishop Blomfield's honour that he died a poor man. His income had averaged £16,000 per annum; but such had been the munificence of his subscriptions and charities, that he had saved nothing. For his family he had made by means of life insurances a fitting provision, and the income secured to him by Act of Parliament enabled him to continue the payment due on his policies. The last scene of the Bishop's life is described by his son with much natural pathos.

"The dying Bishop lay in the chapel-like room (it had once indeed been used as a chapel) in which are arranged the books which Bishop Porteus bequeathed to the see. To this room the invalid had been removed for coolness; and as the night wore away, the fresh breeze which had succeeded a sultry day, stole in from the garden through the great open window at the lower end. On one side of the room, the windows were emblazoned with the armorial bearings of different Prelates; and around it are placed the portraits of all the Bishops of London since the Reformation, the last vacant space having been lately filled by the portrait of Bishop Blomfield himself. All are there—Ridley the martyr,

Sandys and Grindal, the ambitious Laud, Juxon, the friend of Charles I., Compton, who had adorned the Palace-gardens with their rare and stately trees, the statesman Robinson, the learned Gibson, the divines Sherlock and Lowth, the mild and amiable Porteus, who loved Fulham so well, and thanked God the evening before his death that he had been suffered to return thither to die, and Bishop Blomfield's predecessor and friend, the venerable Primate, William Howley."—II. 269, 270.

On the evening of Wednesday, Aug. 5, 1857, death, preceded by a slight convulsion, closed the scene of debility and suffering. His remains were buried in an addition to the churchyard, which he himself had consecrated; his tomb is by the side of the palace moat, and is picturesquely overshadowed by the trees of the palatial garden.

The personal habits and private virtues of Bishop Blomfield are minutely and with true filial piety described in these Memoirs. That the lights of the picture are more marked than the shades will not surprise any one, and the fact need not provoke criticism.

All will concede to the departed Bishop the praise of learning (somewhat limited in its range), a spotless life, a generous heart, and unbounded zeal for the Church of which he was a distinguished Prelate. His faults were precisely those into which a Bishop of the Church of England is in danger of falling. He was not protected from their influence, as were such Prelates as Jeremy Taylor, Tillotson and Heber, by intellectual and moral qualities too strong to be corrupted by the influences of an Established Church. He will not be placed by a judicious critic among those men that have adorned our common Christianity by grand and lofty thoughts or by the unlimited range of their sympathies, but he will ever be mentioned with respect among the most laborious and successful of the Bishops of his Church. To theological literature his contributions were insignificant. He was not by nature exclusively fitted for clerical usefulness. As a statesman or as a lawyer he would probably have risen to equal distinction. The practical part of his mind was much stronger than the ideal. Such men play an important part in their own age, but in after generations their fame has to depend chiefly on the testimony of the more eminent of their contemporaries or on the record of biographers. The Rev. Alfred Blomfield has in these volumes certainly drawn a striking portrait of his father, and has collected much valuable ecclesiastical information; but neither his own powers as a biographer, nor the subject he had in hand, enabled him to produce a work to equal in present interest or enduring value Canon Stanley's *Life of the late Dr. Arnold*.

MODERN CRITICISM OF THE PENTATEUCH.

IN the criticism of ancient writings it is manifestly our first duty to restore the text, as far as possible, to the condition in which its author left it. The various causes of error to which they have been exposed are to be sought out, and in proportion to the success of this search will be the amount of accuracy that will be attainable. In so far as our text is imperfect or erroneous, our views of its subject matter will be unjust to the author, inconsistent with his opinions or opposed to them, unfavourable to the truth whether of history or of doctrine, or subversive of it. When the textual critic has thus, as far as possible, restored the text to its primitive integrity, it becomes the business of the translator to render the ideas of the ancient writer accurately and perspicuously into our modern language; and this latter duty especially should be very carefully performed, before the public are called on to pronounce an opinion on the genuineness or meaning of any ancient writing whatever.

We have lately congratulated the friends of scriptural truth on the progress made in the latter portion of this learned labour by the authors of the Revised Translation of the Old Testament. In the former department of it very much remains to be done, while difficulties many and great, if not insuperable, still lie in the way of the successful performance of it. These difficulties are of various kinds, some peculiar to the Jewish records, and others common to them with the ancient writings of all nations. By a liberal and generous criticism many of them might be removed, and the force of others very much diminished. But the tendency of modern criticism is rather to take the opposite course, to exaggerate difficulties rather than to remove or palliate them, and then to draw extreme conclusions with respect to the books which contain them, as a whole. It may not be a valid objection to this kind of criticism that a general application of it would leave us but a small portion of the history of the ancient world; and yet there are few, not under the influence of a theory or a prejudice, who will not doubt its justice in contemplating its practical results.

As the Pentateuch is the most prominent subject of this destructive criticism, and Dr. Colenso the most popular of those who employ it in this country, we naturally turn to his books for the most ready and apt illustrations of it. And as his objections to the Mosaic records are all of the same kind and treated on the same principle, it is unnecessary to take the trouble of selecting any as better adapted than others to our present purpose. They are equally illustrative of the school of criticism to which he belongs, and equally adapted to the illustration of its unreasonableness and injustice.

It is allowed on all hands that many of the *numbers* found in

the books ascribed to Moses are inaccurate; nor can any satisfactory account be given of the causes to which this inaccuracy is due, or of the time or the manner of its introduction. We know but very imperfectly how these numbers were originally written; but we know enough of the Hebrew mode of expressing large numbers in writing, to be aware that it was extremely imperfect and very liable to error in the course of repeated transcription. Under these circumstances it seems an arbitrary and extravagant critical decision to pronounce a book *unhistorical* because it contains some errors of this description. Herodotus has not escaped an admixture of this kind of error; but, more fortunate than Moses, his writings have escaped the charge of being more of a romance than a history. In the Greek version of the Pentateuch, the numbers differ frequently and widely from those of the Hebrew original; but the conclusion is not drawn from these discrepancies in numbers that the Septuagint version is not really a translation of the more ancient Hebrew records. These discrepancies between the original Pentateuch and its Greek translation do seem to shew, however, that there was a peculiar tendency in the Jewish copyists and translators to take liberties of this sort with their sacred books,—liberties which were not by any means confined to mere numbers,—while yet the substantial history which those books contained remained unaltered. And had the Pentateuch had the benefit of that Christian charity which “thinketh no evil,” the conclusion might have been drawn respecting it too, that it is a real history, though some unreal circumstances have in course of time become attached to it.

On the occasion of the consecration of Aaron and his sons to the priesthood, it is stated, Lev. viii. 1—4, that “Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Gather thou the congregation together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Moses did as Jehovah commanded him. And the assembly was gathered unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.” If we are to credit Hebrew scholars, such as Gesenius and Knobel, the words which Dr. Colenso renders, *unto the door*, should be rendered, *towards the door* of the tabernacle; and then this whole argument, having no sure foundation, falls to the ground at once. Especially the confident assertion of the Bishop, that “as the text says expressly, ‘at the door of the tabernacle,’ they must have come within the court,” vanishes into air.

“All the congregation,” literally understood, means of course all the men, women and children who were under the guidance of Moses. And though Dr. Colenso sometimes adheres so strictly to the Common Version as to found an important argument on a preposition of doubtful meaning, if not falsely translated, he here makes his calculation of the column of twenty miles on the supposition that the whole congregation may have meant only

the six hundred thousand adult males. He does not, indeed, favour us with any calculation of the length of the column when the whole congregation were *assembled unto Moses*, and when, according to the *critical* mode of arrangement, they must have stood in single file; or what were the dimensions of the heap of stones that was formed when *all the congregation* stoned the blaspheming son of the Egyptian (Lev. xxiv. 14).

When Moses first received his commission to rescue his nation from the bondage of Egypt, his plan of proceeding was prescribed to him at the same time. "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." "Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The Lord God of your fathers," &c. (Exod. iii. 14, 16). That Moses, guided equally by respect for Divine command and by his own common sense, communicated thus with the multitude through their princes and elders, is confirmed by other passages, such as Exod. xii. 3, 21, xix. 7, 8; and surely it is only the caprice and perversity of criticism which can overlook these plain and explicit statements, to found an indictment on others which only differ from them in being more brief and inexact.

That Moses should attempt to address a column of men, the farthest of whom were twenty miles distant, and that they should be considered capable under these circumstances of witnessing any ceremony whatever, is very absurd. It is so absurd, indeed, and the absurdity lies so completely on the surface, that it is morally impossible that this can be the real meaning of the passage; for it involves the inevitable conclusion that neither Moses when he attempted to address this multitude, nor Samuel when he wrote this passage of his romance (if he did indeed write it), nor the Jewish people when they accepted it as true history, could have been in their right minds. The absurdity is thus in the critic and not in the record. Moral probabilities have no weight with an algebraic critic; but though these have no place in mathematical calculations, they must be allowed to perform a very important part in historical criticism. The ancient records on which a nation's political and religious life for many centuries has been based, cannot be transferred to the region of fiction by any use of the multiplication-table, however ingenious; much less by such a calculation as is here offered to us, vitiated as it is in its result by the omission of some of the essential conditions of the question. The substantial statement of the Pentateuch is, that Moses communicated the Divine commands to the multitude through their princes and elders, their heads of tribes and families, and the congregation assembled within sight of the tabernacle to witness the divine confirmation of these commands. It is surely a great mistake to subject these ancient Jewish records to the same rules of criticism which would be justly applied to

Thucydides or Xenophon. The writers clearly do not aim at the same precision of expression, nor was the Hebrew language capable of it. But when the critic founds his judgment on a passage which is in itself brief and inexact, without due reference to parallel or explanatory passages which are more full and explicit, and dogmatizes on the meaning of Hebrew words without the concurrence of the greatest masters of the language, his criticism takes very much the character of mere misrepresentation.

While a just and legitimate criticism will not deny the historical character of the ancient Jewish records on the ground that they are not characterized by the same accuracy and consistency which distinguish more modern historical books, so may their historical character remain unimpeached though they record events as having Divine approval which are inconsistent with our modern Christian ideas of what is right. There could be no more evident violation of the principles of sound criticism than to test the records of long past ages by our own standards of intellectual and moral judgment, and pronounce them historical or the contrary in proportion as they are consistent with these. It does not follow that ancient records are not historically trustworthy because they represent men or nations in a low state of mental and moral development, as thinking and acting on principles that are wholly incompatible with our Christian standards of thought and action, and claim a Divine sanction for such actions. That same Providence which now tolerates the existence of savage nations, as well as the savagery of some which call themselves civilized, must be regarded as consistently tolerating both those aspects of human society in past times. Nor can there be any reasonable doubt to the mind of the Christian that good ultimate results are in progress of accomplishment from all the excesses of human barbarity or folly, whether in Egypt or in Canaan, in Dahomey or Virginia. The evident alternative would be the denial of a righteous superintending Providence in the government of the world.

If it be incompatible with the demands of piety or reverence in a religious point of view to ascribe to Divine command the actions of men merely because these actions are incompatible with the spirit of the gospel which we have received from the mercy of a Heavenly Father, to what power shall we ascribe all the other agencies by which human life is destroyed? Who goes forth on the wings of the tempest, or says to the pestilence, Destroy; or commands the earthquake to bury thousands under the ruins of their own works, or under the sea as its troubled waves pass their ancient boundary, or under the mountain as it totters on its everlasting foundations? The convulsions of the natural world have been from the beginning, even in their most terrible and destructive forms, among the most beneficent agencies of a bountiful Providence. And being so, none will deny that it was

consistent with a Father's goodness to send them forth on their terrible but benignant mission. Nor need we look beyond our own immediate age to see national regeneration arising out of the pestilence and famine and war in their most terrible forms. A few have perished, or rather been removed to another portion of their Father's kingdom, while millions have benefited by the calamity which has overwhelmed the few. And while these things occur under our own eyes, as the natural and necessary results of the laws by which the world is governed, we are shocked to be told that Jehovah in ancient times commanded or sanctioned those very means of national regeneration which his providence employs from day to day for the accomplishment of the same purpose.

It is evidently not incompatible with the plans of a righteous and benevolent Providence that some nations should be in a savage state while others are enjoying the blessings of an advanced and growing civilization. By necessary consequence it cannot be incompatible with either wisdom or righteousness that means of discipline and improvement adapted to the intellectual and moral condition of such nations should be employed in the providential government of them. These means are numerous and varied. Among them may be reckoned the passions and vices of the nations themselves. These, like the furies of heathen fable, turn them slowly and painfully from their vices by making them feel how heavy and bitter is the load of guilt and folly which they have laid upon themselves; as a neighbouring nation is now expiating that unrighteous love of gain which was glad to use even slavery itself as a means of success, and has shed torrents of human blood to restore the constitution under which the old passion may be gratified by the same unhallowed means.

No doubt a Creator of infinite power and wisdom could create intelligent and moral beings who would obey the laws of highest reason and purest morality with as much regularity as the planets observe in obeying the physical laws to which they are subjected, or the seasons in preserving their established order. But that was not the Divine plan in the creation of the human race. Individually and collectively, this race is developed from the smallest beginnings, physically and morally; nor can we doubt that the earliest stage of their development is as consistent with the Divine will and purposes as the last; yet because the earliest stage of this development does not correspond with the latest, in the moral and social condition in which their Creator has placed them, the earlier records are pronounced unhistorical. The inference is drawn, without any doubt or hesitation, that to a nation in a wholly different condition from our own, intellectually and morally, no Divine command or precept could have been given which would not be perfectly adapted to the intellectual and moral condition in which we find ourselves. Such

inference is evidently gratuitous and extravagant. It derives its chief support from the assumption that the cruel wars of Joshua could not have been the subject of Divine precept or command. But, since the very same principles of Divine government are carried out silently and without any previous announcement of them, or direction in regard to their fulfilment, in every age and among the nations generally, why may not such announcement and direction have been given to Joshua? Many of the circumstances of him and the people that he led were exceptional as compared with ours, and why not this? The very same measures have Divine approbation in both cases; why should they not be the subject of Divine announcement and command also when the circumstances of the case demand it? They are inconsistent with paternal government, it is said. So was the Indian war, with all its horrors, and the Irish famine, with all its distressing scenes of suffering; and yet these were accepted and approved as instruments of national regeneration; and the paternal character of the Supreme Ruler is no more compromised in the previous announcement of such measures and corresponding directions to those who are to execute them, than in the permission, the practical approbation and the use of them as instruments of the world's government from age to age. On the part of the Governor whose power and wisdom are both infinite, there is no important practical difference between commanding and permitting such events as take place under his eye. He who "maketh the wrath of man to praise him," may quite consistently give direction to the workings of that wrath, for in all times it has been one of the instruments by which the progress of the race has been effected. There is no force in the argument that these, like all other wars, had a strong tendency to degrade and brutalize those who waged them; for neither the Israelite nor the Canaanite was in a moral or religious condition which was capable of being deteriorated by such means. Neither the one nor the other knew anything of the Heavenly Father and the paternal government of the world in which we rejoice to believe. The moral and religious object to be accomplished by this portion of the world's history was to impress the minds of Israelite and Egyptian and Canaanite alike with the infinite superiority of Jehovah to all the gods of the nations; and the means that are here represented as having been adopted for this purpose were well adapted to the circumstances of the case,—the only means, we have good reason to believe, which either Jew or Gentile could understand or would regard.

Why the world's government was or is such as we see it to be, is not for us to inquire. It is enough for our present purpose to be able to trace the harmony of spirit and character which unites the history of Joshua to that of the world in general, and the unity of purpose and administration, on the part of

the world's Supreme Governor, which pervades alike the early history of the Jewish nation and that of every other people. One feature in this history is indeed peculiar to itself. The special divine care and direction which was bestowed on Abraham and his posterity distinguish them from every other nation. But in their history the natural and the supernatural portions are so far in harmony with the providence of our Heavenly Father, as we see its principles developed in the history of the world generally, as to leave no reasonable doubt that we have here in this ancient record of Joshua and his people a genuine page from the primeval history of our race. If so, it must be inconsistent equally with the evidence of history, with the analogy of the world's government, and with the principles of legitimate criticism, to question the genuineness of the book of Joshua because of the divine authority which it claims for the wars which it records.

MATTHEW HENRY: A SHORT ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND
LABOURS;

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF LECTURES DELIVERED ON THE RE-OPENING OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHAPEL, CHESTER, AFTER IMPROVEMENTS INTENDED TO COMMEMORATE THE TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTH.

BY J. K. MONTGOMERY.*

LET us, then, briefly look at this home side, so to speak, of Matthew Henry's religious life and character.

His faithfulness in all the relationships of early years gave surest pledge of devotedness and fidelity in any new relations of later life. Nor was he long in forming them. Soon after his settlement in Chester, he married the daughter of Mr. Hardware, as marked for the Christian graces of her mind as for the comeliness of her person. She belonged to a family enjoying a good social position, and possessed of considerable worldly means. He has thought it worth recording, that on his marriage, in *July* (not August), 1687—"My dear and worthy friend Mr. Greg generously entertained us at his house for four months. In the October following, * * * I took that (Mr. Harvey's house in the friary) in which I have lived ever since—above twenty-two years. And I have made this remark, that in the former half of that time I had five deaths in the house, but in the latter half not one. God has set the one against the other. The Lord fit me for the changes which it is likely are at the door" (MS.).

Having thus founded a home, he founded also a church in the house. But his domestic blessings were not long unclouded.

* Continued from p. 415.

On the birth of their first child his young wife was taken from him. He was greatly afflicted. It was a severe trial of his religious faith. But neither trust nor patience failed. Hope brightened up the gloom. "I know nothing could support me in such a loss but the good hope I have that she is gone to heaven, and that in a little time I shall follow her thither." But even this trying affliction was tempered with mercy. There was still left a living bond of love in the child which was spared. Its baptism, performed in public with great solemnity by the saintly Philip Henry, was a sadly interesting occasion, the widowed father dedicating his first-born and orphaned child in these touching words: "I offer up this my child to the Great God, a plant out of a dry ground, desiring that it may be planted into Christ." And if being watered by the tears of many sympathizing hearts could cause the little seed thus planted to grow into Christ's spirit, the father's desires were not unfulfilled.

But God in mercy wills that time and religious trust shall heal all wounds. Her parents in some measure for a time supplied the place of her who was taken from him; and by their counsel he sought to re-establish his household by a second marriage, which took place in July, 1690, with Mary Warburton, a member of an honourable and wealthy family. It was greatly for the blessing of both parties. As year by year children were added to his household, Mr. Henry was placed at the head of an increasing family. But with blessings came not only responsibilities, but trials and bereavements also. How he met and discharged these responsibilities, and how he bore these afflictions, may be briefly indicated, that his piety and Christian character in his domestic relations may more clearly appear.

Each new birth into the family was welcomed with pious thanksgiving and the devout dedication of the new-born spirit unto God, with desires and prayers suitable to the circumstances of each occasion; and, following the religious custom of our Puritan ancestors, each was publicly improved in an appropriate discourse either by himself or, during the life of his father, by the revered grand-parent of his children.

That he was not forgetful on these occasions of parental responsibilities we may be sure. And perhaps it may be inferred from the very suggestive text chosen by him on the baptism of his only son, Philip, at which he personally officiated: "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son; and if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men."

His children, thus devoutly regarded in infancy, were not less objects of Christian watchfulness and culture as they grew up,—a duty never neglected by the Puritans, if in some respects fulfilled by a discipline never erring on the side of laxity. His own family circle was ordered after the model of his early home. He

had no higher aim than to follow the example of his father. What had proved such a source of blessing at Broad Oak, he could not but hope would be equally blessed in his own household.

Domestic matins and vespers were never neglected in the family of Matthew Henry. Whatever else was omitted, this duty was never forgotten, never slighted, and was always performed with great seriousness. Let us reverently, then, join their family worship; lift up our hearts in the brief prayer for divine blessing and assistance with which the exercise commenced; reverently listen to the short passage of Scripture and brief familiar and practical exposition which followed, and unite in the psalm of praise, "the morning and the evening sacrifice;" and again devoutly join in the earnest, lively, tender prayer offered up with fluent fervency of spirit by the father, priest and king of that religious household, so full and so appropriate to the circumstances of its various members and others present, and bearing in remembrance also the concerns of mankind in the wider relation of life, as a nation, as a church of Christ. Nothing was omitted, yet was nothing made wearisome, in that half hour of morning and evening worship.

And at its close let us look kindly on as each child claims the father's blessing, pronounced with patriarchal gravity and tenderness, "in the name of the Great God who commands the blessing out of Zion, even blessing for evermore." So began each day, and so it closed,—the fitting preparation for its varied duties and cares, and for the sweetness of its nightly repose.

But the family religion, if somewhat Puritan in form yet truly Christian in spirit, did not end here. After the custom in those days—too ascetic and ungenial, perhaps, but not without its good side—they observed family fasts, i. e. protracted and earnest devotional exercises, under any special circumstances in the household or pertaining to friends. He sometimes kept them privately in his study alone, but usually with his family. At other times friends would join them, and even assist on these occasions.

His public labours on the Sunday never interfered with the usual religious exercises at home. Indeed, they were rather increased than diminished on that day. After secret communion in the quiet of his own heart, and of some length, at eight o'clock the household were assembled for family worship, conducted as usual and without curtailment, only made more suitable to the day. *All* would then attend public worship. Dinner, at noon, was followed by a hymn and short prayer. In the evening he usually repeated the heads of both discourses of the day in the family circle (generally much increased by the presence of friends and neighbours), accompanied by singing (two hymns) and prayer, with closing benediction.

After this, but still before the evening meal, he catechised the younger children. After supper, the 136th Psalm was sung; then the elder children and servants were catechised and made to repeat what they could remember of the morning and afternoon sermons. The day was closed with prayer.

This was the Sunday in that Puritan household. Its religious exercises were as nearly as possible those observed in the family of Matthew Henry's predecessor, Mr. Cook, of whom it was said, and it is equally true of his successor, that "he went through all this labour with surprising vigour, cheerfulness and fervour of spirit." But there is added this significant remark in a foot-note to this passage in Calamy, which may also have been true in both cases: "However it may have been with himself, it is scarcely possible that it was so with his whole family; such rigour would incline many young persons to say of the Sabbath, 'What a weariness it is!'"

Let not blame, however, attach to Matthew Henry on this account. He but "kept holy the Sabbath-day" in accordance with his views of its sanctity and obligation, and in conformity to the religious sentiment and custom of the age, originating in reaction against the profanation of the day of rest by courtiers and people in times preceding and concurrent with Puritanism. But, having overstrained the cord, Puritan rigour was itself followed by reaction when the Puritans lost power in the state.

If we follow not their rigorous observance of the Sunday, on grounds alike scriptural and rational, let us still estimate highly its value as a day of rest for the body and for refreshment of the spirit. And let us also keep it holy by due regard to all religious observances suitable to Christian worship and necessary for growth in a Christian spirit and the Christian life; in devoting it to all good works for the improvement and well-being and happiness of others; in kindly and pleasant intercourse by the fireside at home, or in the interchange of the courtesies and friendly offices of social life; in the elevating enjoyment of God's beautiful works in nature, and even of human works of art; by devout and purifying communion of spirit with God and Christ, and the good and holy on earth or in heaven, in our hearts, in the gospel, and in the public services of religion. Remembering, then, who it was that said, and what he meant in saying, "The Sabbath was made for man," we think it truly sanctified by all that provides for the needed rest and refreshment of the body and the spirit; all that promotes true and cheerful piety; all that enlightens the mind, purifies the heart, and cultivates a loving, kindly, Christian spirit; all that promotes innocent enjoyment and true good and happiness in our hearts and homes and social circles; all that chastens desire, subdues evil, advances truth, goodness, holiness, making our most ordinary and trifling thoughts and feelings and occupations religious by the spirit we

carry into them and the spirit which they help to form within us. This is indeed to *christianize* all things, and make every day "holy unto the Lord," whilst teaching us to call "his Sabbath our delight," and to "keep it holy" in the wise and Christian purposes for which its opportunities are used, even though observed with more simple and rational piety, with lighter hearts and more genial spirit and more cheerful countenances than by our Puritan ancestors. Yet let none judge them or one another "in respect of the Sabbath." They observed it according to their consciences and their highest sense of its sanctity and obligation. Let all do the same, and they shall be accepted of God in this respect.

It is in the presence of domestic trial, the loss of kindred and friends, that the tenderer human side of Mr. Henry's nature, the strength and character of his piety, and perhaps the more or less morbid tendencies in some respects of his religious sentiments, most strongly shew themselves.

He thus reflects on the illness of the first child whom he lost : "I desire to leave her in the arms of Him who gave her to me. The will of the Lord be done. I am now sitting by a poor weak child, thinking of the mischievous nature of original sin, by which death reigns over infants;"—his piety taking its hue from his creed; as though death had not reigned over an innocent *animal* creation millions of years before Adam, and as though death were in any way "mischievous" to infants. But when the child dies, the devout father's *heart* speaks out; theology is dumb. "When I part with so dear a child, I have *no reason to say otherwise* than that it is well with *us* and well with the child; for all is well that God doeth." And after the interment—"A sad work, burying a child;" adding, how hopefully, even cheerfully—"Here is now a pretty little garment laid up in the wardrobe of the grave, to be worn again at the resurrection" (that of the body, as he believed). "Blessed be God for the hope of this!"

On another similar occasion, this is his feeling: "I desire to submit; but, O Lord, shew me wherefore Thou contendest with me,"—a view of bereavement very strongly expressed on the death of his revered father: "It looks like a token of God's displeasure to (towards) us who survive." But it was not special to Matthew Henry, but has been common from Job's time downwards; and still prevails amongst many followers of him "who was made perfect through suffering," and of whom we have learned to recognize a *law* of death as well as of life, wisely and lovingly appointed for human blessing,—a divine discipline of life,—a Father's influence drawing his earthly creatures by their tenderest affections, "the cords of a man," towards Himself and the everlasting life, through Christ, the Forerunner to, and ever-living Friend in, that heavenly home whither the righteous follow him.

But on the death of a third child we have this beautiful thought: "Little children in heaven we look upon as the *via lactea*; the individuals scarce discernible, but altogether beautifying the heavens." There are many tender allusions on such occasions to the resting-place of those whom he had given to God. On the interment of his brother Hardware's child, he says: "He was laid in Trinity church, in the same grave with the precious remains of my dear wife; perhaps it may be next opened for me." Not so, faithful servant of Christ; thy Master has still work for thee on earth. Yet how constantly he kept that event in view appears from many passages in his diary year by year, and touchingly in such incidents as this: "I have laid my poor babe (the second child whom he lost) in the grave in Trinity church; the fourth this year buried there—two of my brother's children and two of my own. Yet the Lord is gracious; the Lord prepare me for that cold and silent grave."

But his piety appears also in all his relations of life—in the liveliest sympathy towards others in times of trial and sorrow, and in affectionate interest and regard at all times, rejoicing with them in life as well as mourning with or for them in death. With what true filial piety did he cherish the mother whose pride he was, during her life, and speak of her when removed by death! With what respectful affection did he treat the aged parents of his first loved wife, and sorrow for them when gathered to their fathers! Could anything be more beautiful than the expression of his sorrowing friendship on occasion of the too early death of his cherished friend Mr. Greg; or the tenderness of sorrow with which he mourned the loss of his dear and honoured brother Tylston, indicated in the very selection of the words, "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me," from which he preached on the occasion of his death!

But he was ever ready also to render whatever kind offices were required by the circumstances of friends in their trials and afflictions. And when he could do no more, he freely gave his prayers and time, in shape of lengthened and frequent correspondence for the comfort of the living. But when possible, he would largely aid some whom those he mourned had left behind, in one instance adopting into his own family several children of a deceased kinsman, to whom Mrs. Henry, to her praise be it told, in carrying out his benevolent desires became a second mother.

Our knowledge of his inner life is derived chiefly from his diary, so carefully kept, after a custom prevailing in those days, though with no design "to be seen of men." Here are a few entries respecting his estimate of self, shewn in his reflections on his birthdays, the commencement of the year or other anniversary occasions: "Thus long have I lived, a wasting candle, still

kept burning, but to little purpose." "I now close the year, complaining not of God, but of my own wretched heart."

On his 34th birthday, this is the record of his state of mind: "I have been endeavouring this morning to get my heart affected (*sic*) with the sin in which I was born, and with the sins of my life hitherto." And on another occasion: "I have reason to lament greatly the strength of my corruptions and weakness of my graces. I am still full of vain thoughts and empty of good thoughts." And more to like effect, which none believed respecting him, and which none but himself would have dared to say.

Such exaggerated expression of self-abasement has prevailed, we know, even amongst the most religious-minded, especially of ardent temperament, from Paul's day to this. But without inquiring how far it may be regarded generally as mere conformity to a conventional mode of religious confession common in Puritan times, and still amongst some classes of Christians, or as the result simply of a morbid bias of peculiar theological views concerning human nature and condition, we may well believe that he who was so true in all things else was not consciously otherwise in this respect. And the higher, in truth, the standard set up in the heart, the more severely will it judge all shortcoming in the endeavour to approach it, and the deeper will be the feeling of sinfulness in view of even slight departures from the requirements of such ideal of duty. In purest souls small defects will thus appear greater than even great sins may seem to minds of less transparent goodness; as lightest vapours more perceptibly obscure the clear summer sunshine than denser clouds the dull light in murkier skies.

But this self-abasement was ever accompanied in Matthew Henry with that increasing aspiration after Christian excellence and greater nearness to God, and that devout prayerfulness for divine aid, the Holy Spirit, for guidance and strength in his life-work, and to prepare him for living, for dying, for heavenly life, which mark the reality and nature of his inward life, the strength and influence of that faith and piety which pervaded and gave direction to his whole life and ministry, and sustained him amid his arduous and varied labours, even making them light and pleasant; for they were both to him.

His tastes and habits continued scholarly and studious throughout life. He had a strong sense of the value of time. Its right use he made a matter of conscience, and a robust constitution gave him power of application equal to his sense of duty. He was stern in his self-judgment when he permitted anything to interfere with his studies, and was always very uncomfortable over any unnecessary interruptions. Orderly and systematic in his habits, he was usually in his study early in the morning, frequently at five, sometimes at four o'clock. Breakfasting at seven

or eight, he would return to his studies, after a brief interval following family worship, till about noon; and again, after his early dinner, often till four o'clock. From this till the evening meal was his time for visiting the sick or his friends; after which he would frequently retire to his study for some hours.

Such were his usual habits, by which he was enabled to accomplish his great and varied work as a preacher, a pastor, an evangelist and an expositor of Scripture. And for this work, to which he devoted himself only too ardently and unremittingly for health's sake or for lengthened life, his scholarly pursuits, his studious habits, and even his Puritan tastes and feelings, were perhaps not only best, but even indispensably needful.

These tastes and habits account in great measure for a marked peculiarity of character in Matthew Henry—that though gifted with many social qualities, “mild demeanour and rare courtesy,”—a ready flow of pleasing conversation, rich in information, which he could agreeably communicate,—not wanting in genial cheerfulness of disposition, which he also encouraged in others, so long as it avoided levity or trifling, of which he was perhaps too sternly Puritan in his reproof,—warm in his friendships, ever ready to serve others, even at the sacrifice of his time and personal inclinations, having inherited from his father the Christian “art of obliging,”—yet, in all these respects so fitted to adorn and shine in every social circle, he was still somewhat unsocial, not to say recluse. He admitted few to his *intimate* friendship, following his own rule that “your friends should be few and good.” And he often lamented over hours spent even in friendly intercourse, complaining “how much precious time is lost in the company of those we love.”

However delightful the society or agreeable the entertainment, he would often sigh, “O that I had the wings of a dove, that I might flee away!” And he records on one occasion, “I would not for anything live such a life for a few days together.” And on another, after a day spent in mixed company and very interesting conversation, as he allows, “I look upon this day as lost. Lord, forgive my trifling! I would rather preach twice every day in the week than spend another day so unprofitably.” But we have the clue to the tastes and feelings which made society generally so distasteful to him and seem so unprofitable. He tells us, “I am always *better* when alone. No place like my study; no companion like a good book, especially the book of God.”

It may be that Puritanism, of which Mr. Henry was the “representative man” in his own generation, had lost sight of the many-sidedness of human nature by too exclusive regard to that which is its highest side, and overlooked, perhaps, who it was that had commended, and what he meant in commending,

the saying, "Man shall not live by bread alone," not even by that bread of life which the "book of God" supplies; but by every divine provision for every faculty, every part of our nature; and that in the enjoyment of all, whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we may still glorify God by the spirit we carry into every right work and sphere and scene of life; yea, every innocent enjoyment also; and *by the spirit which our right use of them helps to form within ourselves.*

But, for Matthew Henry's work, his tastes and feelings and habits may have been the most fitting and necessary agency. This the true light, surely, in which this aspect of his character should be regarded, without making it either the standard or the measure for others not placed in like circumstances nor having like work given them to do.

Returning to his ministerial life, we find that his congregation continued to increase from the very time of his settlement. During the persecutions of the Protestants in Ireland, "many, very many, that were forced to flee (in 1688) for their safety, took up their abode here (in Chester), and among them many Dissenters, who joyn'd themselves to us; these added much to our numbers. In July, 1690, when, after the battle of the Boyn, Dublin was reduced, they returned" (MS.).

During the previous year also an epidemic fever had somewhat thinned their ranks, having carried off many of Mr. Henry's leading people, especially Mr. Greg, who "had been most active in forming our society," and "many others of note." Still it continued to flourish. In 1691, their place of meeting was enlarged by the addition of a new bay; eight years later "it was very inconvenient on many accounts."

It appears that the zealous friend in whose grounds their place of meeting was situated had removed to Dublin. His eldest son having died, his son John Henthorn, then in possession of the property, "did not countenance us as he (his father) had done" (MS.). This is good Mr. Henry's way of saying that he had gone over to the Church, as others have since done, and perhaps from the same worldly spirit, through the same social influences; or it may be that the younger generation, less strongly attached than their fathers to the principles of Nonconformity, or less informed concerning them, or having fewer scruples of conscience in religious matters, when the personal bonds were removed which held them to the church of their fathers, quietly returned to that ecclesiastical connection which involved fewest inconveniences and sacrifices, and promised greatest social advantages, without even any professed change of religious sentiment.

The liberty of Dissenters had been established some years before, and as "most places (Mr. Henry says) had built new chappels, so it was agreed that we should build one;" and accordingly the foundation of this chapel was laid in September, 1699.

It was finished in July, and opened in August, A.D. 1700.* Mr. Henry preached from a happily selected text (Josh. xxii. 22, 23). It was a frank, faithful, yet conciliatory exposition and defence of the position and principles of Nonconformists, then not only despised as schismatics and sectaries, but maligned as rebels against their king and as traitors to their country. The sermon still exists, and shews how firmly he adhered to his principles, how truly he understood them, and how earnestly he enforced and defended them; yet withal how conciliatory was his spirit, how enlarged his charity towards those from whom he differed, let the generous and Christian exhortation at the close of his first sermon in this place bear witness:

“Be at peace with those from whom you differ in opinion, and receive them not with doubtful disputations. Carefully watch that a diversity of communion cause not an alienation of affection. Be as ready to do any office of love and kindness and respect to those from whom you dissent, as to those with whom you consent: resolve, tho’ you differ from them, you will not differ with them.”

And I am glad of the opportunity of repeating from this pulpit, after a lapse of more than a century and a half, his noble words on the same occasion, accepting them in their broadest sense, and commending them to all the churches:

“We are far from engrossing religion and the church to ourselves and those of our own way, or thinking that we are the only elect people of God: *from our hearts we abhor and renounce all such narrow principles* as are contrary to Catholic Christianity, and undermine and straiten its sure and large foundations.”

And the narrow spirit of bigotry, whether in Nonconformists or amongst Churchmen, he always rebuked. It was repugnant to his benevolent spirit.

Old Mr. Harvey, the senior Nonconformist minister in the city, died about a year before this chapel was built, and was succeeded by his son, Mr. Jonathan Harvey. Mr. Henry and he lived on the most friendly terms. They frequently exchanged on lecture evenings. But young Mr. Harvey, being in very delicate health and finding his work most difficult to him, took advantage of some disagreement (as Mr. Henry mentions, MS.) with the landlady of the house in which his congregation met, “to let fall his meeting in Sept. 1706.” About the following Christmas most of his congregation joined Mr. Henry’s meeting, many of them (as he mentions) with the express stipulation that

* An account of all the items of its cost is preserved in the chapel-books, together with a list of the contributors towards its erection and the sums given by each, amounting to £49l. 10s. 3d., the cost of the chapel being £533. 16s. 1d. How the difference was made up does not appear, but it was opened “free of debt.” The gallery was added a few years later at the cost of £88. 0s. 5d.

if Mr. Harvey resumed, they would return to him (MS.). But he died soon after his retirement.

It was for their accommodation that the gallery was built in this place in May, 1707, on which Mr. Henry takes occasion to record—"And now I reckon we came to be above 350 communicants, and above 300 ordinarily present. And, blessed be God, a great deal of comfort and unanimity among us, and my ministry well accepted, for which I praise the Lord.—We know how to enlarge the straitness of the place; God by his grace enlarge the straitness of our hearts!" (MS.).

We have his later doctrinal views in clear and concise outline in a record of all the courses of sermons which he had preached during his ministry in Chester. One of these is "a Body of Divinity," which occupied him for fourteen years, and was only concluded at the very close of his ministry. His broad and practical treatment of Christian doctrine shews that, though his views were what would be called orthodox and evangelical, he was yet far from holding the extreme opinions often so dogmatically preached, and with but little charity towards others of different sentiments, by many sections of Christians.

His views upon and method in treating two or three important subjects may be interesting. "Concerning Man," he considers all made of one blood; sets forth the dignity of the body, in its use, as a temple of God, and of the soul, the spiritual nature, in its immortality: man's relation to God and one to another, in view of all having "one Father," being created by one God: the state in which he was created, holy, happy, a state of probation. This is all.

"Concerning Sin," his outline is very full. Its nature, transgression of the law: exceeding sinful, foolish and deceiving. Exhorts, Do not sin, nor make a mock at sin. That man was made upright, but sought out many inventions,—the evidence of his "apostacy." Sin came by Adam's transgression: his disobedience made many sinners: the extent, all born in sin. He infers here necessity of regeneration; "the sovereign freeness of divine grace." He discriminates between "corruption" of nature and "sin." "The *product* of original *corruption* is actual transgression" (sin). This corruption pertains to the "understanding, imagination, will and affections, and conscience." "The miserable consequences of sin"—to our first parents, "they withdrew from God," "God drove them from him"—to their posterity, they are "under God's wrath" (scrip. ref., Eph. ii. 3, written surely of Gentiles, fleshly-minded and licentious); "under his curse" (scrip. ref., Gal. iii. 10, written concerning Jews only, who had "not in all things" kept their law); liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, to the pains of hell for ever. Yet here is his practical application of the whole subject—"the use" he would have men make of this state of things:

"1. To those yet in this state, Up and get out of this place.

"2. To those that thro' grace are got out of it, Look not behind."

In the interpretation of the Scripture passages on which the views thus sketched out are founded, there will be considerable difference amongst Christians. But many important points of difference between these opinions, as expressed by Mr. Henry and as popularly held, will be apparent to those accustomed to look closely into theological controversies.

The concluding subjects of this "Body of Divinity" were, "Concerning the four last things: Death, Judgment, the Torments of Hell, the Happiness of Heaven."

His views, especially upon the two last-named of these solemn subjects, are interesting, and may perhaps surprise some. For their full expression he refers to his commentary on Matthew **xxv.**, where we find the future condition of the wicked, the nature and extent and duration of their punishment, pictured in colours truly awful. But there are yet bright gleams of sunshine to relieve the awful gloom. Lights play among the shadows, casting them into deeper shade indeed, yet inspiring hope where all were else despair. He thinks future punishment eternal, but believes the everlasting "fire" to be "*a torment as grievous as that of fire is to the body, and more.*" The "fire" is the "wrath of the Eternal God," and was "originally prepared for the devil and his angels." But he declares that "if men *will make themselves* associates of Satan *by indulging their lusts*, they may *thank themselves* if they become sharers in that misery prepared for him and his associates."

The ground of their sentence he regards as "*omissions*" of "the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith," and "of works of charity to the poor." They are condemned "*for the omission of that good which it was in the power of their hand to do.*" He sets forth also that "every man shall be determined to a state of everlasting happiness or misery *according to what he did* in this world of trial and probation." "Hell" he regards as "a destruction from the presence of the Lord." "It is the hell of hell to depart from Christ."

But "heaven is life; and the life of the soul results from its union with God, as that of the body from its union with the soul. The heavenly life consists in conformity to God, and immediate, uninterrupted communion with Him."

Such are his views of the torments of hell and the happiness of heaven, in many of their features dark and awful enough, yet for the most part scriptural, reasonable and beautiful, and so free from those material elements and arbitrary principles which make the popular representations so unreal and repulsive, cause the unbelieving to turn away or to scoff, however they serve as a terror to frighten children, or as a rod for the fool's back, or a reward to entice the simple amongst believers.

In the series "Concerning God," whilst he repeats more than once that "there is but one God," and that "*the Lord Jehovah is the one only living and true God*," it is simply affirmed that "there are three Persons in the Godhead." And singularly enough, this is the only reference to the "Trinity" in the whole series of sermons preached by him during his ministry in Chester, though references to the subject, more or less frequent, are to be found in his Commentary. His modest statement, in his early confession of faith, that "this is a revealed mystery which I do believe but cannot understand," may account for this infrequent allusion to the Trinity. He believed it firmly indeed, but preaching mysteries was neither his practice nor his mission.

Matthew Henry was in the habit of clenching every statement with a text of Scripture, generally very aptly chosen. The passage selected in this case by one so "mighty in the Scriptures" was 1 John v. 7 (the three heavenly witnesses). He was too candid a man and too shrewd a theologian either to have used or relied upon any passage whose authority he thought at all doubtful. We conclude therefore that, with many even amongst the learned at that time and much later, he believed the passage in John's Epistle to be genuine, though as a biblical scholar he must have been familiar with the controversies originating in its omission in the first edition of Erasmus's Greek Text, and the fact of its insertion in his third edition only as a point of honour, and upon the authority of a MS. reported to have been found in Britain, and now supposed to be the one still in Dublin College Library, which certainly contains the passage, but is of no authority, not being older than the close of the fifteenth century. The passage has long been regarded by the best authorities as an interpolation, and the point seems to be finally set at rest by the Sinaitic MS. recently published by Professor Tischendorf. It is the oldest and most valuable MS. of the New Testament yet discovered, and does not contain the 7th verse of 1 John v. found in our Authorized Version.

For five-and-twenty years had Matthew Henry laboured in this congregation amongst a people who appreciated, honoured and loved him as a pastor and a friend, and to whom he also was greatly attached; bound by the strong ties of friendship and the still stronger ties of a lengthened ministry—a little band at first, who had grown under his faithful oversight into a flourishing and influential congregation; strongly attached also to the city which was the scene of his earliest labours alike by long residence, by many living friendships and many hallowed associations with dear ones whom he had followed to the grave—friends with whom he took sweet counsel and walked unto the house of God in company, the sisters who had been companions of his early years, the brothers-in-law whom he had greatly honoured, the children of his affections and the dear mother of his first-born.

And now the time had come when in God's providence he must leave all behind, and go forth to new scenes of labour, to form new connections, new friends, new associations. Never, indeed, were these destined to supply the place of or to supplant those from which he had now to sever himself.

He had frequently resisted tempting invitations very urgently pressed upon him, chiefly to congregations in London, to succeed Dr. Bates at Hackney (1699), to Salters'-Hall congregation, to that also which had once been John Howe's, and again to Hackney on the death of Mr. Bellio, Dr. Bates' successor. But he always refused, sometimes peremptorily; in other cases he would plead his love for his Chester friends and theirs for him, and that he could not desert them so long as they were true to him.

But the importunate widow succeeded at last. So did the congregation at Hackney obtain their ends so perseveringly pursued. He was at first very reluctant; even frequent entreaties long failed to move him. But the pleadings of many whose judgment he respected, joined to the importunities of the people, at length prevailed. A deputation from London came to him when on the point of finally refusing, urging "for the sake of the public good that he would not deny them." This "turned the scales" with him.

The reconsideration preceding this result brought into view many strong grounds in favour of removal. His many calls to London almost seemed to him an intimation of Providence. Some discouragements about that time in Chester tempted him to regard his work here as in great measure finished. Might not another be more useful now? Might not he be more useful in a congregation where his services were new? The increasing fatigue from riding might soon prevent him preaching much abroad, and confine his labours within the narrow limits of the city. In London he would have wider sphere for extra congregational work, with less toil and peril, greater opportunities for doing good and a greater number of hearers. He would also have greater facilities for consulting books, and be more convenient to the press whilst publishing the remainder of his Commentary. All these matters had weight with him; and after prayerfully seeking guidance of God to incline his heart to that way which was most for his glory, he declared that he went "with a good conscience and willing to be found in the way of duty," praying that "the change concerning this congregation might work for good to it." His Chester friends had wisely left the decision to his own conscience and affections. His conscience was at length satisfied to go, and he thought his affections should not be allowed to overrule his judgment.

So on Lord's-day, May 11, 1712, he preached his farewell sermon. But immediately after, he records—"It was a very sad day. . . . I see I have been unkind to the congregation who loved

me too well." He has also recorded—"By this determination I have brought upon myself more grief and care and concern than I could have imagined, and have many a time wished it undone." Thus closed Matthew Henry's long ministry in this place, to the deep sorrow and great loss of many in his congregation and in this city, where his name still lives a "household word."

A wider sphere was indeed opened to him in London. Nor did he fail to avail himself of it with his characteristic earnestness and energy. He shunned no labour, nor yielded to the desire for greater quiet and repose so natural at fifty. In addition to two services on Sunday at Hackney, conducted in all respects as his public ministrations in Chester, he would often take a morning lecture at Little St. Hellen's, sometimes an evening lecture at Wapping or Redcliffe on the Surrey side, or at the charity-schools in Shakespeare's Walk, returning in time to conduct the usual Sunday evening exercises in his family, equal to an ordinary service. Besides his weekly catechumens' class at Hackney on Saturday, he undertook a catechetical lecture at Islington on the Tuesday, modestly choosing that place, though invited to deliver it at other more important places in the city, because of its being more retired, and perhaps from association with his residence there at Mr. Doolittle's in former years.

During the week he would often preach daily, sometimes twice a day. He also took great interest at this time in the formation of charity day-schools for the secular and religious instruction of the young amongst Dissenters. Regarding them as desirable in themselves, he thought they were then becoming necessary, when the Church were instilling a hatred of Dissent into the young under their care. So Mr. Henry thought it desirable that some should be brought up in its principles, and at the same time taught to have great charity and moderation towards the Establishment, and if possible overcome evil with good.

Such briefly were his ministerial labours during his first year in London, when he again turns his face joyously towards the scene of his early ministry and the people of his affections. He had promised on leaving Chester to return for a few Sabbaths every year. The journey was not then so trifling a matter as now, when you can leave Chester, reach London, transact business in the city, and return within twenty-four hours. Mr. Henry was three days in reaching Broad Oak, where he preached on the evening of his arrival. On Sunday, July 27, 1713, we find him once more occupying this pulpit and preaching to his first flock. He records that "it was very pleasant to me to preach in the old place, where I have often met with God and been owned by Him." He officiated again on the following Sunday, as he says, "to a great congregation," and during the week had kept a congregational fast.

During the following week he preached at Middlewich, and

attended the meeting of ministers at Knutsford, preaching again in this place on the Sunday after. On the Monday he "set out with much ado for Nantwich." There he preached in the evening, going forward the same night to Wrenburywood, and thence to Whitchurch, preaching at both places. On the sixth day he arrived in London, and found his "tabernacle in peace." Thus was spent Matthew Henry's first annual holiday.

Even before leaving Chester he had felt that his excessive labours had already made inroads upon his once strong constitution. He had suffered more than once from a painful disease which had proved fatal to many neighbouring ministers, and during the week after his return to London he experienced another attack, which prevented him from preaching on the following Sunday, which he thus notices: "A melancholy day, yet not without some communion with God. Perhaps I have been inordinately desirous of being at my study and work again."

He had several attacks during the next few months. After one unusually violent, he writes: "Very well to-day, though very ill yesterday. How this life is counterchanged! And yet I am but girding on my harness. Lord, prepare me for the next fit and for the last fit" (attack). Yet even then his days were numbered. But the end came in very different form to that which he thus calmly anticipated.

Nothing of special interest marks the remaining few months of his ministry at Hackney. On Sunday, May 30th, 1714, on the eve of a second journey to Chester, he administered the communion, and at that ordinance parted from his people, never again to meet them till united with them anew and for ever in his Father's kingdom. Matthew Henry never returned to Hackney. Thus abruptly closed his earthly ministry; for though he preached afterwards, yet never again to his own flock.

There is an interest and sacredness in the almost prophetic record of his communion of soul with God and his renewed self-dedication on entering this last year of his earthly life, which make it worthy of being recalled on this occasion and in this place: "Father, I give thee my heart; use it for thy glory this year; employ me in thy service, fit me for thy will; if it should be a year of sickness and pain, if a year of family affliction, *if it be my dying year*, welcome thy will." It was his dying year; God's will was welcomed.

And now the end draws sadly near. Drawn by a strange providence to the city wherein his best years had been spent, his greatest earthly work performed, and towards the flock to whom he had been so long and truly attached, he came to find amongst them his last resting-place by the side of those whom he had lost in earlier life. He would not have wished it otherwise, nor could it have been more happily ordered for him.

As he had parted with his people at Hackney, so he met his

old friends in Chester, at the communion table, "a full communion" to welcome him; "none had gone off." On the two following Sundays also he was in his old pulpit, preaching to his old flock with his usual earnestness of the everlasting "rest that remaineth for the people of God," warning them lest they should come short of it. "Heaven is joy, and everything there is joyful," were almost his parting words, and into that joy how soon was he to enter!

The interim between these Sundays was spent in visiting distant friends, joining the brethren of the Cheshire classis at Knutsford, preaching at Wrexham and at Chowbent in Lancashire, whence he returned, more than usually wearied by his journey and labours, to spend his last earthly Sabbath amongst his early friends in Chester, and on the Monday he set out on his return to London. Some of his friends thought that he looked heavy, and one said that they should never see him again. But he said he was well, and started to fulfil an engagement to preach at Nantwich that evening. He had not proceeded many miles when his horse fell and threw him; but feeling no inconvenience from his fall, he pressed on, contrary to the wishes of the friends who accompanied him.

He arrived at Nantwich and preached for the last time; and by a strange coincidence, in the place where his career as a preacher commenced, there also it closed. It was observed that he preached with less than his usual liveliness. He was taken ill, fell into a profound sleep, and was awakened only to find himself unable to proceed upon his journey that evening as he had intended, and so he retired to rest at the house of his host at Nantwich. He had a strong presentiment that the hour to which he had long looked forward had at length come. "Pray with me," was his request to those about him; "for now I cannot pray for myself." He spoke to them of the excellency of spiritual comforts, and blest God that they were his. To his early friend Mr. Illidge, then at his bedside, he remarked: "You have been used to take notice of the sayings of dying men. This is mine—that a life spent in the service of God and communion with Him is the most comfortable and pleasant life that any one can live in this world." This was his dying testimony to the value he placed upon and the happiness to be found in a holy, Christian life. They were the last words of that devoted servant of God whose memory must ever be sacred in this place.

That night was his last on earth. It was a restless night, closing in the unconsciousness of apoplexy. With the morning dawn the spirit of Matthew Henry awakened to that heavenly life for which he had lived so long in daily preparation, and had so faithfully laboured to prepare others. This was June the 22nd, 1714, and his age but fifty-two.

On the Friday following that Tuesday of his departure, his honoured remains were borne into the city he had left but a few days before in apparent health, though with the hand of death, it seems, even then upon his heart. Before removal from Nantwich, his cherished friend Mr. Reynolds, of Shrewsbury, delivered an impressive address over his remains. On reaching the city, eight of the clergy and many ministers from the neighbourhood and more distant places, several carriages, many horsemen, and very many persons on foot, joined the sad procession. Six ministers were the bearers; two of them were his own and his father's successors; and at length that "cold and silent grave," containing the precious remains of many dear to him, was opened to receive himself. A simple brass plate within the communion rails of Trinity church, close by, bearing an inscription to the memory of his "greatly loved wife," records that the same Matthew Henry, idem Matthæus Henry, lies beside those mortal remains which a bereaved husband had deposited there in tears: *Posuit in lachrymis viduatus conjux.*

Thus passed away Matthew Henry. The news of his death spread mourning in the churches. Funeral sermons were preached in most of the Nonconformist pulpits. At the Thursday lecture that week, the sad event was the subject of discourse in this place. Again on Sunday afternoon, Mr. Gardner, Matthew Henry's successor, preached a funeral sermon, as Mr. Whittington, his assistant, had done in the morning. Dr. Williams and Mr. Tong, on the same day, performed the same duty at Hackney.

His memory still lives in the churches, cherished alike by Churchmen and Dissenters. His spirit still lives amongst us. "His works perpetuate his fame." His beautiful *Life of Philip Henry*, his devout *Exposition of the Holy Scriptures*, with many minor works, the fruit of his industry, learning and piety, will never suffer his name to perish. The righteous are held in everlasting remembrance.

The devout feeling with which many from all parts of the country look upon the simple plate that marks his grave; the reverence with which so many visit this chapel in which he ministered, stand in the pulpit which he so long occupied, or take into their hands his *Commentary* once chained in that gallery; the interest so many feel in the little square summer-house overlooking his neat garden—the study, as tradition reports, in which for the most part his *Commentary* was written; the value placed upon every relic associated with his name, every memorial of him, and not least upon the register of this chapel, with its historical record in his own minute and careful writing;—all attest how deeply and how widely cherished is the memory of the wise and good man and faithful servant of Christ whose mortal part rests in the adjacent churchyard, where by his side lies his benevolent successor, who ministered in this place for more than fifty years.

Together lies their mortal dust, together live their immortal spirits for ever with God and Christ, amongst the spirits of just men made perfect.

Brethren, ever may the memory of him who is in all our hearts and thoughts to-day be a spur to us to follow in the steps of his devout piety, his holy living in the service of God and Christ and his fellow-men, which I cannot better commend to you than in his dying words, with the sincere prayer that it may also be our blessed experience, that "a life spent in the service of God and in communion with Him is the most comfortable and pleasant life any one can live in this world."

COLENSO ON THE PENTATEUCH. PART III.*

WE have, in former numbers, endeavoured to give a clear account of Bishop Colenso's views and arguments as contained in his first and second Parts, expressing our dissent from some of his critical conclusions as freely as our sympathy with his spirit of freedom and earnest truth-seeking. His Part I., it will be remembered, was devoted to the arithmetical difficulties of the Exodus, which we agree with Dean Milman in thinking to be insuperable; but admitting, with the Dean, that the numbers of the Israelites must be immensely exaggerated, we agree with him that the history itself is rendered credible by this admission. Dr. Colenso, on the other hand, declares the record to be *unhistorical* in its character, and even doubts the existence of Moses. His second Part was employed in endeavouring to assign the date and authorship of the *Élohim* and *Jehovah* portions of the Pentateuch respectively, by means chiefly of a numerical comparison of the occurrence of the two Divine names in the Psalms; from which induction he concluded that Samuel was the *Jehovist* writer and some one of his contemporaries (unknown, but probably to be soon identified by further critical induction) the *Elohist*. This conclusion seemed to us needlessly destructive of the claims of the books to a higher antiquity, while also too definite and positive to be a satisfactory answer to the old question of the composite authorship of the Pentateuch; and the computation of averages as applied to the occurrence of the two Divine names in the Psalms seemed more ingenious than wise or natural. Part III., now before us, is devoted to the settlement of the authorship of Deuteronomy; and in this, as in the former case, Dr. Colenso is more definite and positive in his conclusion than pre-

* The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua critically examined. By the Right Rev. John William Colenso, D.D., Bishop of Natal. Part III. Longman. 1863.

vious critics have found it possible to be. That conclusion is to the effect that the prophet Jeremiah was the author.

It is well known to biblical students that the book of Deuteronomy (or rather the chief part of it) is easily separable from the rest of the Pentateuch, and that scholars have been disposed to regard it as a later addition to the original work. Its contents are a series of exhortations represented to have been spoken by Moses to the Israelites shortly before his death, in which he recapitulates a large portion of the law as detailed in the former books, and earnestly invokes obedience to the Divine commandments, promising national blessings on their obedience and denouncing woes on any departure from duty. The style of these portions is, appropriately to the subject, rhetorical and flowing, compared with the previous detail of rites and ceremonies. To these recapitulations and exhortations are added, in the last four chapters, the lawgiver's charge to Joshua as his successor, the song of Moses, his blessing upon the children of Israel, and a brief record of his death (of course by a later hand, if the rest be ascribed to Moses). Any reader may see at once that if the last four chapters of Deuteronomy (xxx. — xxxiv.) were joined to the end of Numbers, the books would together make a completed history of the life and work of Moses; and the insertion of the rest of the book of Deuteronomy by a later writer is easily conceivable, especially if tradition told that the lawgiver had so recapitulated his law and added such exhortations shortly before his death.

Thus far reasonable Bible students even in England had advanced; but to settle the personal authorship of Deuteronomy had seemed as hopeless or presumptuous a work as to identify the Elohist and the Jehovist authors. Dr. Colenso, however, once roused by his Zulu convert to inquire into the theological difficulties which he used to "put aside" like other orthodox Churchmen, is not content without a certainty as definite as if his problem were one of mathematics.

Of course the narrative of the discovery of the *book of the law* (a book, rather) by the high-priest Hilkiab in the reign of Josiah, as narrated in 2 Kings xxii. 8—17, forms the basis of the inquiry so far as scriptural history can supply it:

"And Hilkiab the high-priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiab gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the Lord. And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiab the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king. And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes. And the king

commanded Hilkiyah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king's, saying, Go ye, inquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us. So Hilkiyah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college), and they communed with her. And she said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me, Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read: Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched."

We naturally ask ourselves what this narrative *is meant* to imply. Had Hilkiyah been earnestly searching for the book of the law? And could it have been really lost? Or, without searching, had he accidentally and to his surprise found it? Was no book of the law then known before this time? And what was this book of the law thus found? Was it the whole Pentateuch? Or that part which we call Deuteronomy? Certainly the tone of the book as here described in the effects produced by reading it, agrees with the hortatory and admonitory tone of Deuteronomy; and there can be little hesitation in believing that this part of the law is the book referred to. Then the question is, whether the book so found was at that time newly written?

That it was so, and that its production at that time was a "pious fraud" on the part of Hilkiyah the high-priest and Huldah the prophetess, designed to aid the restoration of the true worship, is an opinion already familiar to the readers of Mr. Newman's Hebrew Monarchy. Dr. Colenso fully adopts the opinion as to the formation of the book, but endeavours to remove the brand of conscious fraud from its alleged writer and his confederates—with what success let the reader judge:

"Thus there is nothing in the known facts of the case to negative the supposition, that the 'Book of the Law' was now for the first time produced, and read in the ears of the people,—except, of course, the moral difficulty which we find in attributing such a proceeding as this to *good men*, as Hilkiyah and, perhaps, Jeremiah. But we must not judge of those times by our own; nor must we leave out of consideration the circumstances which may have justified to their minds such an act as this. The deplorable condition of their people, sunk in the most debasing idolatries, might be thought to require some powerful influence to be brought upon them, beyond even an ordinary prophet's voice. Prophets had already spoken,—Joel, Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Micah; but their

words had not availed to keep back the people from those deadly sins, which had already brought down upon the Ten Tribes a fearful judgment, and threatened before long a yet more terrible woe upon Judah and Jerusalem. What if the authority of the great Lawgiver should be brought to bear upon them? And,—since the Law-Book, as it then existed, was not well suited for the present necessity, with its long details of the lives of their forefathers, and of the events which attended the deliverance out of Egypt and the march through the wilderness, as well as its minute directions about artistic and ceremonial matters,—what if the very *spirit* of the older Law should be summed up in a powerful address, adapted to the present circumstances of the times—such as he *would* have delivered, if now present with his people—and put into the mouth of the departing Lawgiver?”—P. 426.

“There is also another point of view from which the matter must be regarded. Supposing (to fix our ideas) that Jeremiah really wrote the book, we must not forget that he was a Prophet and, as such, habitually disposed to regard all the special impulses of his mind to religious activity, as direct inspirations from the Divine Source of Truth. To us, with our inductive training and scientific habits of mind, the correct statement of *facts* appears of the first necessity; and consciously to misstate them, or to state as fact what we do not know or believe from *external* testimony to be fact, is a crime against Truth. But to a man who believed himself to be in *immediate* communication with the Source of all Truth, this condition must have been reversed. The *inner* Voice, which he believed to be the Voice of the Divine Teacher, would become all powerful—would silence at once all doubts and questionings. What it ordered him to do, he would do without hesitation, as by direct command of God, and all considerations as to morality or immorality would either not be entertained at all, or would only take the form of misgivings as to whether, possibly, in any particular case, the command itself was really Divine.

“Let us imagine, then, that Jeremiah, or any other contemporary Seer, meditating upon the condition of his country, and the means of weaning his people from idolatry, *became possessed* with the idea of writing to them an address, as in the name of Moses, of the kind which we have just been considering, in which the laws ascribed to him, and handed down from an earlier age, which were now in many respects unsuitable, should be adapted to the present circumstances of the times, and re-enforced with solemn prophetic utterances. This thought, we may believe, would take in the Prophet’s mind the form of a Divine command. All question of *deception* or *fraus pia* would vanish. And Huldah, too, in like manner, if she knew of what was being done, would consider, not whether it was right or wrong to speak to the Jews in the name of Moses, but what might happen, since these threats of coming judgment, thus spoken, were uttered by Divine Inspiration, and, therefore, were certainly true.”—Pp. 427, 428.

To us this account of the matter seems hardly satisfactory; nor does the author himself, we think, quite feel it so; for he takes care to observe that Huldah almost *studiously avoids* asserting that the book was an old book, and makes *no reference* to Moses; then he suggests that the effect upon the king’s mind

and the movement among the people may have been far greater than had been anticipated; and also that "perhaps, after a time, the young king became aware of the real facts of the case, and his zeal may have been damped by the discovery,"—an acknowledgment surely that however different the ancient Hebrew idea of authors' rights and duties might be from the modern English one, the transaction as here imagined would not have been free from moral difficulty in its own day.

The arguments by which Dr. Colenso concludes Jeremiah to have been the writer of Deuteronomy are some of them general and some specific. He makes an "*approximation* to the age of the Deuteronomist" by such observations as these: that this author uses the phrase *levites* or *sons of Levi* (instead of *sons of Aaron*) for priests, and that the same usage prevails in Jeremiah and the later prophets; that he and Jeremiah use *the law* in its collective sense, whereas in the earlier books it is generally (but not always, as he admits) used to denote some particular law; that he confines all sacrifices to *one place*, a restriction not clear at any rate in the earlier books; that he does not mention the *feast of trumpets* or the *day of atonement* in his recapitulation of the feasts. Our author also, with his usual arithmetical precision, counts up certain phrases common to Deuteronomy and the later prophets which occur rarely or not at all in the earlier books of the Pentateuch,—an argument which, to be conclusive, ought also to shew (what is only now and then shewn) that the same idea occurred and required to be expressed in the earlier books, and was expressed by a different word or idiom. To bring home the authorship to Jeremiah personally, he observes a general similarity of style (which had not escaped Mr. Newman's notice, who thinks, however, that Jeremiah *imitates* the style of Deuteronomy); he assumes that Jeremiah, who is described (i. 1) as "the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin," was the son of Josiah's *high-priest* (as if he would not, in that case, have so described himself or been so described by the editor of his prophecies); and his argument leaves us to infer, from this assumed family relationship, the probability of mutual co-operation between the priest and the prophet, classes usually the very antithesis of each other. The author, however, still "reserves for another Part the full consideration of this question, as well as of the additional reasons, derived from a close examination of the book of Genesis, which appear to him to determine, with some approach to certainty, the age of the Elohist as contemporary with that of Samuel" (p. 618).

This reserving for yet another Part the full consideration of the questions to which the present and previous Parts are avowedly devoted, is, we must say, very tantalizing. No number of additional Parts can make a whole book. The population question, the Jehovah and Elohim documents, and the authorship of

Deuteronomy, are but so many critical fragments towards a possible future book. It may have been a necessity in Dr. Colenso's circumstances (and if so, it is an unfortunate one) to publish piecemeal, instead of waiting till he could produce his matured and balanced thoughts on the *Pentateuch*. In fact, the good Bishop, having begun to think on these subjects somewhat late, has been thinking them aloud ever since to such a miscellaneous audience as he perhaps will not find when at last he may deliberately put his matured thoughts on paper. We regret, equally for the author's sake and for that of his subject, the disproportion, the one-sidedness and (we think) the haste which mark his books. The Horatian precept for a poet, to keep back his poems for nine years, would not less secure the permanent credit of a theologian's writings. Or Paul's self-discipline of silence in Arabia for three years, if that example could have been followed, might even now be maturing a large critical view of the *Pentateuch*, by which we should be rewarded at last for longer waiting.

As in the two previous Parts, the Preface and Conclusion are beyond all comparison the interesting and valuable portions. Both simple and scholar will skip half the critical details as minute, perplexing and undecisive, to dwell upon the personal and moral aspects of the book, which command every true man's sympathy and approval. In a truly Christian and apostolic spirit, Bishop Colenso heaps the coals of fire upon the heads of his episcopal traducers:

"But I have, I confess, been disappointed in the course which has been adopted by the great body of my Episcopal Brethren. I had no reason to suppose that I should receive from *all* of them expressions of sympathy, or encouraging help in my work; from *some* I could only expect condemnation; and, while dissenting from their judgment, I should yet have respected the religious feelings, however (as it seemed to me) mistaken, which to their own minds justified their censures. But I did not imagine that so many of the Bishops of England, with the Bishop of Oxford at their head, would have absolutely ignored the existence of such a science as Biblical criticism, and its undoubted and undeniable results, in its application to the earlier Hebrew Scriptures. I believed that there were men of science and scholars among them, who, being acquainted generally with these results, would be aware of their reality and importance, and who would feel it to be impossible, in this age of enquiry, any longer to bar out their admission, as facts to be taken account of, like any other facts of science, by the more intelligent minds of the Church of England. I had hoped that their influence would have prevailed to check the hasty judgment of others, less informed than themselves on these matters; and that, if my Episcopal Brethren, generally, did not think it expedient to hold out to me a brotherly right hand of fellowship,—if they condemned me as going too far in my conclusions, or as reasoning too confidently on insufficient premisses,—they would, at least, have recognised that my arguments were not altogether without some real foundation, and ought to be judged upon their merits,—ought to be considered, and, if need be, checked

and corrected, not merely thrown aside with contemptuous language, as unfounded and ridiculous. I could not have believed, for instance, that the Bishop of Oxford would have ventured to say that my 'speculations, so rash and feeble in themselves,' are 'in all essential points but the repetition of old and often-answered cavils against the Word of God;'—and still less that His Grace, the Primate of all England, would have pronounced with the high authority of his office, that my objections 'are for the most part puerile and trite,'—'so puerile, that an intelligent youth, who read his Bible with care, could draw the fitting answers from the Bible itself,—so trite, that they have been again and again refuted, two hundred years ago by Archbishop Usher, one of the most learned analysts of this or of any country, more recently by Bishop Watson and others.'

"It is hardly necessary for me to repeat what the Public Press has already said in reply to such assertions as the above, viz. that many of the criticisms in these volumes have *never* been answered, and that the writings of Archbishop Usher and Bishop Watson will throw no light whatever upon the most important questions which are here discussed. As well might we refer to books of the last century for a refutation of the objections which are raised to the historical truth of some portions of the book of Genesis, by recent discoveries in geological science. But, on behalf of those who regard the Bible with a true reverence, as a Divinely-given Teacher, which God in His Providence has 'caused to be written for our learning,' but which He wills us to read with intelligent discrimination of its contents, not with a blind unreasoning idolatry of the mere letter, I respectfully protest against the language which the Archbishop of Canterbury has, apparently, applied to all those who read my books with interest, by summing them up under three categories, as either 'ignorant,' or 'half-informed,' or else 'rejoicing in anything which can free them from the troublesome restraints of religion.' The object of my whole work is to bind the consciences of men more imperatively than ever by the law of true Religion, which is the law of life and happiness. But, inasmuch as multitudes have already broken loose from the restraints of that traditional religious teaching, which they know to be contradicted by some of the most familiar results of modern Science, now made the common heritage of every educated English child, I believe that I have only done my duty, as a Minister of the National Church, in endeavouring to re-establish a permanent union between the teachings of Religion and Science, and to heal effectively that breach between them, which otherwise will assuredly widen day by day, with infinite injury to the Church itself, and to the whole community."—Pref., pp. xvi—xviii.

Equally appropriate rebukes are in an equally firm but gentle manner dealt out to York, Exeter and Manchester (and to Chichester in a note simply recording what Mrs. Malaprop would call his *epitaphs*). And with the higher class of minds in the episcopal and professorial ranks he thus calmly remonstrates:

"I thought that, of course, the Bishops and Doctors of the Church,—more especially those who, like Archbishop Thomson and Bishop Ellicott, have gained a reputation for theological learning, or who, like Dean Alford and Prof. Browne, have expressed the very same view in sub-

stance as my own,—would protect me, at all events, from such accusations. Otherwise, I should have produced further evidence in my Second Part, to justify my use of the language so much condemned.”—P. xxxiii.

The subject-matter of the accusations here alluded to forms a very interesting and instructive doctrinal episode to the Colenso controversy. Christianity has made itself responsible for the divine origin of Judaism; and those who hold the Mosaic authorship of the *Pentateuch* are apt to think that our Lord's words, “Moses wrote of me,” are impugned by such speculations as those of Dr. Colenso. Our author, in his second Part, fairly met this objection by avowing the possibility of imperfection in our Lord's human knowledge even of Jewish questions. He now says:

“This only I repeat once more. The recognition of the gradual growth of Jesus, as the Son of Man, in human knowledge and science of all kinds, such as that which concerns the question of the age and authorship of the *Pentateuch*, is perfectly compatible with—rather, is absolutely required by—the most orthodox faith in His Divinity, as the Eternal Son of God.”—P. xxxiii.

For this language he has been charged with robbing Christ of his deity by denying his omniscience. In the Preface to this third Part, a clerical friend, Mr. Houghton, of Preston Rectory, Wellington, Salop, is chivalrous enough to come to his aid, and to shew by ample quotations from the fathers and orthodox divines, including Dean Alford and Prof. Harold Browne, that it always has been good orthodoxy to maintain our Lord's ignorance of some things as Son of Man, while maintaining his omniscience as Son of God. These quotations are very curious. We are thankful not to have to explain our belief by distinctions confounding differences as they do. But we are bound to admit that Dr. Colenso's heresies are perfectly within the line of doctrinal orthodoxy as here defined:

“Lightfoot says: ‘To say that the Second Person in the Trinity knows not something, is blasphemous; to say so of the *Messias*, is not so, who, nevertheless, was the same with the Second Person in the Trinity.’”—P. xxxviii.

“And Waterland: ‘As it may be truly said of the *body* of man that it is not *immortal*, though the soul be, so it may be truly said that the *Son of Man* was not *knowing*, though the *Son of God* knew everything. . . . He denies the knowledge of the day of judgment, but in respect of His *human nature*; in which respect also he is said to have ‘increased in wisdom,’ Luke ii. 52, the Divine *Logos* having with the human nature assumed the *ignorance* and other *infirmities* proper to it.’”—Pp. xxxviii, xxxix.

Is it not a curious phenomenon in theology that such doctrinal confusion can still co-exist with the free and searching spirit of textual criticism which pervades the Bishop of Natal's examination of the *Pentateuch*? But it is satisfactory to find that he

has, with Dean Milman, laid firm hold of the distinction, so easy and plain, but so heretical, which we have always expressed or implied, between the Scriptures as *being* the word of God and as *containing* it. All the difference between truth and fallacy, between sense and nonsense, between right and wrong, if we must not also say between dull orthodoxy and free private judgment, lies in this simple and plain distinction:

“In fact, judging from their published documents, it is very difficult to say what many of those who have so severely condemned me, do really believe themselves with respect to the narratives of the Pentateuch. They have expressed themselves, indeed, in the strongest terms, as resting their hopes of eternity upon the ‘Word of God.’ But *that*, I trust, I do, as truly and entirely as they. There is a sense also in which I am quite ready to speak of the Bible as the ‘Word of God,’—just as we call a Church the ‘House of God,’ without meaning, therefore, to say that the plan or material of the building is Divine, or that God meets with us there exclusively. But I prefer the language of the First Homily, ‘*In it (Holy Scripture) is contained the true Word of God;*’ and I agree fully with the language of Dean Milman, who says, *Hist. of the Jews*, Pref. p. xi: ‘The moral and religious truth, *and this alone*, I apprehend, is the ‘Word of God’ contained in the Sacred Writings. I know no passage in which this emphatic term is applied to any sentence or saying which does not convey or enforce such truth.’

“On this account I am unwilling to make use of the expression ‘The Bible *is* the Word of God,’—though in the sense of the words above explained I *can* use it,—because it is so likely to mislead the uneducated, and induce them to attach a superstitious reverence to the mere text of Scripture. But, when my Brethren use the expression ‘Word of God,’ the question arises, What do *they* mean? Their language at one time seems to imply that they attach a Divine Infallibility to every line and letter of the mere text of the Bible, so that ‘all our hopes for eternity, the very foundations of our faith, our nearest and dearest consolations, are taken from us, if one line of that Sacred Book be declared to be unfaithful or untrustworthy.’

“But, when the writer of the above words is pressed for an answer, as to a statement of the Bible being true on one particular point of natural history, he immediately, while maintaining his position in words, abandons it in point of fact, and retreats behind the assertion that ‘every line of Scripture will amply bear the pressure of any test applied to it, *if viewed with relation to the subject it really refers to, the state, mentally and morally, of those to whom it was addressed, and the effect it was intended to convey*’—a statement, which, whatever may be its precise meaning, at all events allows of the recognition of the results of my own critical enquiries.”—Pp. xxviii, xxix.

We should do great injustice to this volume if we did not quote a few of the concluding passages as illustrative of the religious spirit which its author derives from his free criticism of the Pentateuch. On the Son of Man “made like unto his brethren,” he says:

“I say, then, again, once more, whatever other questions may be

raised by the progress of scientific criticism, *this difficulty vanishes* for all who believe that our Lord Jesus Christ was born into the world to be a true 'Son of Man,'—that He was 'made like unto His brethren,'—that He was 'tried in all points like as we are,' was weak, and faint, and weary, as we are, was hungry and thirsty, as we are,—that He was subject also to all the other limitations of our nature, mental and spiritual, as well as bodily, needing food for the mind as well as for the body, and growing, like any other of the sons of men, in wisdom and knowledge as He did in strength and stature, in both respects within the bounds of human development,—nay, needing also, as we do, supplies of spiritual sustenance, the Living Bread and Living Water, which He too received, as we do, from the fulness of His Father's Love, His Father and our Father, His God and our God."—Pp. 623, 624.

His emancipation from the bondage of literal and plenary inspiration enables him to doubt whether the extirpation of the Canaanitish tribes had ever been attempted, much more commanded from on high :

"Such laws as the above are felt at once to be directly contradictory to those first principles of humanity and equity, which God our Creator has planted within us, to be our monitors and guides through life; and they equally contradict the plainest teaching of the Gospel of Christ. I have explained how the writer may be justly relieved from the reproach of having set on record such sanguinary laws as these, with any idea of their being really carried out. The 'rebellious son' is only a figure of 'rebellious Israel;' and the judgment denounced against his disobedience shadows forth the penalty deserved by those, who will not 'obey the voice of Jehovah,' their Heavenly Father; and so, too, the last of the above laws simply expresses the burning zeal which glowed within him against the idolatrous practices, which were then common among his own people, and which they had adopted either from the Canaanite nations of former days, or more probably from the heathen tribes then living around them.

"The Prophet here makes use of the tribes of Canaan as a standing type of such idolaters. In the age of Josiah, when these words were written down, those tribes, we may believe, no longer existed: they had long disappeared, or been merged in the Israelitish people. The history teaches us that they never were exterminated,—that 'Uriah the Hittite' served as a captain in David's army, and 'Araunah the Jebusite' had his threshing-floor on the site of the future temple at Jerusalem. But the Deuteronomist, by setting forth before his people the *figure* of these tribes, driven out from their old abodes, as a judgment for their sins, and ruthlessly exterminated by the hands of Jehovah's worshippers, seeks to remind the latter of their duty and of their danger, of the terrible woe of expatriation, and even extermination, which would be their just recompense, if they, too, practised the like abominations. The command to slay the men of a distant city, and to save the women and children, &c. alive, is probably introduced by way of *contrast* to the other more terrible command, and not with any view of its being really executed; and, indeed, in Josiah's time there was little probability of any such distant conquests being made by Israel.

"In such a way as this we can explain intelligibly the fact, that even

a good man, a lover of justice and mercy, an inspired Prophet, could yet write down such laws as these. But it is surely nothing else than a tampering with the truth, an unintentional, doubtless, but yet a real, dishonesty,—and therefore, if done with a religious motive, only (disguise it as we will) an *idolatrous*, worship, of a God, who is *not* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the very God of Truth,—if we endeavour to defend such laws as these as truly and infallibly Divine, and really uttered from the mouth of the most Holy and Blessed One, on the principle that—not a mere man like Moses, but—the Divine Being Himself, was compelled to adapt His laws to an imperfect state of society,—to ‘preconceived and popular ideas,’—and, therefore, was led to utter commands which a child instructed in the first lessons of the Gospel,—nay, which a heathen walking in that Light which ‘lighteneth every man that cometh into the world,’—can at once condemn as unjust and inhuman.”—Pp. 626—628.

And here is his conclusion, if not of the whole matter, at least of his third Part, in which the reader will notice how he includes the maternal with the paternal attributes of God, without running, as good Theodore Parker did, into the confines of the grotesque:

“It is true that God loves us as dear children, and that we may go to Him at all times, as to a wise and tender Father, with a child-like trust and love, as with a child-like reverence and fear. Rather, we *must* go to Him thus if we would please Him, and act upon the words of Him who has taught us all to say, ‘Our Father.’ We must ‘consider in our hearts’ that He, who has planted in our breasts, as parents, dear love to our children, a love stronger than death, does by that very love of ours shadow forth to us His own Eternal Love. Our love can take in every child of the family; *our* hearts can find a place for all; yes, and our love embraces the far-off prodigal, in his miserable wanderings, no less surely and no less tenderly, than the dear obedient child, that sits by our side, rejoicing in the sweet delights of home. He that has taught us to love our children in this way, how shall He not also love His children, with a Love in which the separate loves of earthly parents are blended, and find their full, infinite expression,—the Father’s loving wisdom and firmness, to guide and counsel, and, if need be, to correct and chasten,—the Mother’s tender pity and compassion, that will draw near with sweet consolations, in each hour of sorrow and suffering, will sympathise with every grief and trial, will bow down to hear each shame-stricken confession, will be ready to receive the first broken words of penitence, and whisper the promise of forgiveness and peace.

“Ah! truly, the little child may cling to its mother’s neck, and the mother’s love will feel the gentle pressure, and will delight to feel it: but it is not the feeble clinging of the little one that holds it up; it is the strong arm of love that embraces it. And we, in our most earnest prayers and aspirations, in our cleaving unto God, in our longing and striving after Truth as in these poor enquiries, are but as babes, ‘stretching out weak hands of faith’ to lay hold of Him, Whom no man hath seen or can see, but Who, unseen, is ever near us, whose tender love embraces all His children, those that are far off as well as those that are near, the heathen and the Christian, the sinner and the Saint.

"Happy, indeed, are we, who are blessed to know this—to know the high calling and the glorious privileges of the children of God—not that we may be more *safe* than others, who as yet know it not, but that we may be filled with hope and strength and courage in the assurance of this Truth,—that we may be more living and earnest and joyful in our work,—more brave to speak the Truth, to do the Right, to wage eternal war with all that is false and base and evil, within us and without,—more patient in suffering,—more firm and true in temptation and trial,—more sorrowful and ashamed when we have fallen,—more quick to rise, and go on again, in the path of duty, with tears and thanksgivings,—more eager to tell out the Love of God to others, whether to those who as yet are groping, 'if haply they may feel after Him and find Him,' Who 'is not far from any one of them,' 'in Whom they live and move and have their being,' or to those who *have* known Him, but know no longer now the joy of His children, 'sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, fast bound in misery and iron.'

"But, in all this, it is not our knowledge, however clear, or our faith, however firm and orthodox, or our charity, however bright or pure, that holds us up daily, and binds us to the Bosom of our God. 'Our Father' will delight in all the sacred confidences of His children,—their clings of faith and hope,—their longings of pure desire for a closer sense of His Presence,—their holy aspirations and penitential confessions. But it is not our prayer that will hold us up. It is His Love alone which does this.

'THE ETERNAL GOD IS OUR REFUGE,
AND UNDERNEATH ARE THE EVERLASTING ARMS.'—Pp. 630—632.

THE TENDENCIES AND PROSPECTS OF UNITARIANISM.*

[We gladly give insertion to the article that follows, although we dissent from one or two of the opinions stated: e.g. we think the prevailing effect of Theodore Parker's writings injurious rather than helpful to Christian faith. We feel greater confidence, too, in those religious truths of which daylight is the more fitting emblem than darkness. In theology, as in morality, we would fain *walk as children of light*.—ED. C. R.]

THE work named underneath is a thoughtful, well-written book on a subject in which our readers have a special interest. The author is evidently a man well versed in the subject of which he treats, and there is a freshness in the way he handles it that keeps alive the attention of the reader, and makes what is written at once instructive and suggestive. With a full appreciation of the difficulties that stand in the way of Unitarianism, Mr. Orr writes in a hopeful, earnest spirit, and sees in the gra-

* Unitarianism in the Present Time: its Tendencies and Prospects. By John Orr, Author of Theism, a Treatise on God, Providence and Immortality. London—Whitfield.

dual change that is coming over Unitarianism, a spirit admirably adapted to harmonize with the advancing tendencies of the age. The first four chapters of his book are devoted to an exposition of Unitarian principles concerning God, Man, Christ and Christianity. The author's idea of God is a very noble one, and finely brings out the importance of the doctrines of the Divine unity and the paternal character of God. The doctrine concerning Man, too, is well stated, and the contrast between the Unitarian and the Trinitarian view of human nature clearly and faithfully drawn. Mr. Orr is in sympathy with the bolder spirits of our free denomination. There is, as he himself admits, a resemblance between his views regarding God and man and those held by Theodore Parker. He tries, it is true, to draw an important distinction between his theology and that of Parker; but if his objections to Parker are worth anything, they apply with equal force against himself. Thus he says,

"By our present line of reflection we are reminded of the theology of Theodore Parker—a theology concerning which we have to say, that, in its *positive aspects*, it appears to be worthy of its author. In looking on religion as an outgrowth from human nature, and obtaining its highest recommendation in its inherent qualities, Parker followed impressions left in a Unitarian home. And it is only when we go down beneath the surface and reach the foundations, that we find anything that repels. In resting religion, not on the inspiration and authority of Christ, but on indeterminate particulars of vague instinct, Parker inverted the pyramid; but what he rested on this insecure foundation—his positive principles, his views of God and man, and of religion as expressing itself in everything beautiful in sentiment and authoritative in secular obligation—seem altogether unexceptionable and generally admirable."—P. 34.

We read this passage and the note appended to it several times, thinking it possible we had misapprehended the author, and even now we speak with some hesitation; for the thing Parker is condemned for doing, Mr. Orr himself has so distinctly done in other parts of his book, that we are not quite sure we understand him. If Parker only followed impressions left in a Unitarian home when he looked on religion as an outgrowth from human nature, then to his early Unitarian training he was indebted for the very thing he is condemned for. If the root of all religion is the inspiration and authority of Jesus, then religion cannot be an outgrowth of human nature. If not native, it must be exotic, and will require an artificial atmosphere to live in. Much as we reverence Jesus, we should be sorry to feel that religion rested only on his authority. If Parker's theology fell short of the Christian standard, it was not because he found the root of all religion in human nature; for the Word made flesh in Christ is the light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. The mission of Jesus, as we understand it, was not

to import a new element into human nature, but to quicken and call forth the seeds of virtue, holiness and love already latent there. "Man," says Dr. Channing, "is glorious and happy, not by what he has, but by what he is. He can receive nothing better or nobler than the unfolding of his own powers." That the religion taught in the parables and discourses of the New Testament, and illustrated by the life of Jesus, satisfies the deepest wants and aspirations of the human soul, we firmly believe, and this is to us the best proof of its divinity that can be offered. If it called forth no sympathizing voice within the soul, and came to us supported only by external authority, we could never have made it our own, or felt its power amid the trials and duties of life. It is not when we go beneath the surface and penetrate to the foundation on which religion rests, that we differ from Parker. His mind was singularly adapted for taking a firm, broad grasp of any subject that came within its reach, and it was only in matters of detail requiring nicety of touch and patient care that he failed. There was much in historical Christianity which he set aside with a rough hand, that a sounder critic and a more exact scholar would have retained; but he certainly did great service to rational religion by shewing so clearly the basis on which it rests, and to liberal Christianity by calling attention to the moral excellence of Christ's character and the spirituality of his teachings.

Having expounded the Unitarian doctrine concerning God and concerning Man, Mr. Orr proceeds to the Unitarian doctrine concerning Christ and Christianity, which he expounds in a liberal and rational spirit, bringing into prominence the spiritual and practical side of Christ's teachings. The next chapter passes in review the Unitarianism of the past and the present, and shews how, under the influence of a more spiritual philosophy, some of the errors and mistakes of the past are being corrected in the present. This is a somewhat delicate task, yet Mr. Orr has performed it in a genial spirit, so that readers who may even have little sympathy for his opinions must admire his candour. He has drawn the contrast between the older and the newer schools of Unitarian thought a little too sharply, perhaps; and he rather underrates, we think, the immense services rendered to free thought and free speech by the elder Unitarian worthies. We are the descendants of men who loved truth more than ease or worldly reputation. They were diligent searchers after truth and faithful witnesses to the light they had received; and though their reward was not to be large outward success, yet they were content to do their work in their own way, and leave the issue with God. Nevertheless, there is much truth in the following passage:

"The Unitarianism of fifty years back has been sometimes decried as superficial. We consider that there is some ground for the allegation,

although the imputation should be thrown upon the age and not on any particular of its products. The age, and more especially its philosophy, was superficial; and we believe that its spirit was manifested not only in the Unitarian view of divine influence, but in the Unitarian view of *the mysterious*. Is it not an historical fact, that the religious sentiments have only strenuously clung to ideas going out into the immeasurable, surrounded with an ample margin of darkness, and concealing more than they reveal, suggesting incomprehensibility and immensity beyond the farthest horizon of view? The heavens of night, hiding solemnities in their gloom and drawing the imagination out into the infinite, how much more suggestive are they of religious thought than all the brilliancy of day! On account of their natural solemnity, evening and morning, and the depths of umbrageous woods, and buildings where the windows shut out the light, have generally been chosen by man for the more sacred exercises of religion. In their impatience with the obscurities and contradictions involved in the popular theology, and which ask protection from exposure on account of their character as mysteries, our Unitarian forefathers, however, seem to have forgotten these facts; and though acknowledging the existence of the mysterious, as every one must, allowed it no religious function as a solemnizer of the feelings or enlarger of the conceptions. Their whole philosophy on the subject amounted just to this—Mysteries mean truths unknown, and as the unknown cannot be an object of belief, better leave it alone. But it is now felt, we conceive, that mystery is an element in all religious truth, and the sentiment of the mysterious a component of the religious life; and that as the devotional feelings come forth specially in the evening inviting to contemplation, and the night bringing out the stars, they also increase in solemnity and depth when directed towards truth opening like the grave into the darkness, and like the grave, too, opening out into the unfathomable immense. To occupy our whole reverence, or to raise admiration into adoration, the objects of our contemplation in religion must be as much above ourselves as to extend out of sight, suggesting territories untravelled over by the reason, and adequately known only to Omniscience.”—P. 74.

After a modest statement of the services rendered by Unitarianism, we have two most interesting chapters on Unitarianism and Science, and Unitarianism and Social Reform. The author is at home in the scientific and philanthropic movements of the age, and sees that Unitarianism is the only form of religion that can fully enter into them and sympathize with them. Science is hostile to the notions of an infallible Bible and a fall of man bringing death and manifold disorder into the world. Some few men of reputation, such as Professor Balfour, of Edinburgh, may still see in the thorns on a briar-bush a sign that the earth was cursed for man's sake. But these witnesses for the old faith are fast disappearing, and their places being filled by men whose scientific investigations are not trammelled by the dogmas of a narrow theological creed. Science, too, is hostile to the doctrine of the Trinity, for throughout the boundless realms of creation it bears witness, in the unity of creative design, to the existence

of One Supreme Will. Well, therefore, may the believers in the popular theology dread the revelations of science, for there is scarcely an orthodox doctrine that they do not endanger, and few scientific men that are not more or less heterodox. The philanthropic movements of the day all more or less bear witness in favour of the benignant spirit of Unitarianism, and silently condemn the sterner features of the orthodox creed. The mitigation of the criminal code, and the growing conviction that punishment is not revenge, are slowly but surely preparing the way for nobler conceptions of God's justice and mercy than those furnished by the popular faiths. Surely if we recognize the elements of good, hidden beneath the crust of evil, in the poor child we send to the reformatory, and mercifully seek to develop them, God will not be less merciful in the world to come than man is here. Thus in almost every respect Unitarianism is so heartily in sympathy with the advancing spirit of the age, that unless Unitarians are false to the trust reposed in them, it must make way. Its progress, however, cannot be rapid, for its conquests are not gained through appeals to fear, nor amid the excitement of so-called "revivals." Mr. Orr has carefully summed up the difficulties that lie between Unitarianism and outward success, and these are neither few nor light. But we do not agree with him in placing the want of power to excite wonder among our difficulties. A religion that has hardened down into a number of dry dogmas, that settles everything beforehand and leaves no room for doubt or adoring trust, has, we admit, a great charm for many minds, but it has little power to touch the springs of wonder in the soul, and bring man face to face with problems before which the boldest intellect falls back in humility and silent awe. The popular preacher can appeal to the fears of his hearers, and the popular faith is more dramatic than ours; hence our preaching is never so likely to produce excitement as the preaching of orthodox ministers. But if we are doomed to speak of many things with less certainty than they do, we are less fettered by a defined belief and therefore more open to the domain of wonder. The attitude of the apostle seeing through a glass darkly in this life and looking forward hopefully to the time he would be face to face with reality, is certainly not that of the popular preacher who has the whole mysteries of Providence at his finger ends; but which is the more open to wonder is a question easily decided.

The last chapter of Mr. Orr's book, on the Future of Unitarianism, gives a cheering account of the progress of free thought and liberal Christianity throughout Europe within the last few years. Were the book not published at a very moderate price, we should suggest reprinting the last chapter in the form of a tract; but as it is, we commend the book itself to our readers, and take leave of it trusting that it may have a wide field of usefulness before it. The question raised by it regarding the

future prospects of Unitarianism is one in which for a long time we have taken a deep interest, and we sincerely think that a great work is opening out before the Unitarian church. We can never speak with the certainty of orthodox preachers concerning things unseen. We can never attempt to gain people's sympathies through appealing to their fears. We can never preach salvation by dogma or by ceremony, and so are shut out from not a few of the common sources of popularity. But if we may not evoke the worship of fear, we can draw souls to God by love. We can apply religion to the every-day affairs of life, and speak of it, not as remedy for some defect in our nature, but as the spring of all pure thoughts, brave deeds and loving impulses. We have no need to dread the advances of science, scriptural criticism or philanthropic reform, for we have a faith to recommend that will welcome gladly and harmonize with all truth. There are multitudes of intelligent men and women in our large towns and great cities whom it is our special business to instruct. They are dissatisfied with the popular faiths, and in many instances alienated from religion altogether. They are not to be won back by dogmatic preaching and elaborate doctrinal sermons, but by the sympathy of holiness and the genuine power of religious love. We must help them to feel that religion is indeed one of the greatest realities of life; that it is not a something for sacred days and solemn temples only, but a living spirit that should go with them into all the varied details of their daily life. The love of God would lighten the pressure of many a sore trial, and gild with glory the edges of many a dark cloud: the love of man would sanctify all pure human affections, and draw closer the ties which bind us to our fellow-men. There is certainly a great work before the religious teacher who, with something like prophetic earnestness and living sympathy, will throw himself upon the masses of the people, in no hope of building up a mere sect or gaining himself a great name, but as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, to work and fight and pray, to win souls to holiness and God by a gospel of glad tidings to the doubting, the sinning and the suffering sons of men. A preacher who can make men feel that the religion of Christ is at one with the beautiful world in which they live, real as the love they bear their children, and a divine source of strength and hope to the weary battler amid the difficulties and temptations of life, would find a glad welcome in these days, and find it too, perhaps, where some of us least expect it.

NOTES ON THE OLD TESTAMENT.

2 KINGS xvi. 6: "At that time Resin, king of Syria, recovered Elath to Syria, and drove the Jews from Elath. And the Edomites came to Elath, and dwelt there unto this day."

Above eighty MSS. authorize us thus to write Edomites instead of Syrians. If this reading is not allowed, we must suppose that Elath here spoken of is not the well-known town of that name at the head of the Red Sea, but some other town not otherwise mentioned, except in 2 Kings xiv. 22.

2 Chronicles xxxii. 33: "And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him on the hill-road of the sepulchres of the sons of David."

The Authorized Version has "chiefest of the sepulchres," but in no place is this word used otherwise than for a steep ascent.

Jeremiah xlvii. 4: "Jehovah will spoil the Philistines, the remnant of the isle of Caphtor."

Caphtor would seem to be the name of one of the islands on the eastern side of the Delta, between two of the forked branches of the Nile. The Authorized Version has, the country of Caphtor.

Exod. xxii. 26: "If thou at all take thy neighbour's cloak to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down."

The Authorized Version has raiment, thus not teaching us that it was the cloak or outer garment that was alone held sacred. This is the law referred to in Matthew v. 40, but misunderstood in Luke vi. 29.

Gen. xxxiv. 12: "Ask me never so much purchase money and gift, and I will give according as he shall say unto me; but give me the damsel to wife."

The Authorized Version here has dowry instead of purchase money: it does not tell us that the wife was to be bought with a sum of money paid to the father.

1 Kings vi. 3: "And the porch before the great hall of the house, twenty cubits was the length thereof."

The house of the Lord built by Solomon consisted of a great hall, called in the Authorized Version the temple, and the smaller room, the holy of holies, behind it, called in the Authorized Version the oracle. Thus in the Authorized Version the temple-yard with its several courts is sometimes very properly called the holy place, and sometimes carelessly called the temple. The sacred building within the temple-yard, or the house, is also sometimes called the temple, while the great hall of the house is

again sometimes called the temple. With these mistranslations, it is hopeless for the English reader to hope to understand the building and its courts.

1 Chron. iii. 19: "And the sons of Zerubbabel were Meshullam and Hananiah, and Shelomith their sister; and Hashubah [a sister], and Ohel, and Berechiah, and Hasadiah, who dwelt at Hesed, five."

The Authorized Version, instead of, "who dwelt at Hesed," has the name of a sixth son, namely, Jushab-hesed, and thus contradicts the text, which says that there were only five sons. Hashubah is evidently a sister, being a feminine adjective, meaning estimable. Some readers may perhaps think such corrections of the translation as the above too trifling for notice.

1 Chron. ii. 23: "And he took from Geshur and Syria the hamlets of Jair with Kenath, and the towns thereof."

This is sufficiently literal and clearly the meaning of the passage, and it is confirmed by the history in Numbers xxxii. 41.

Genesis x. 30: "And their dwelling [namely the Arabs] was in the East, from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar [or the Written] Mountain."

The Authorized Version, keeping, though unnecessarily, to the exact order of the words, has led to the opinion that Mount Sephar was to be searched for on the eastern side of Arabia. But its name of Written Mountain sufficiently identifies it with the Sinai of Moses, and then allows us to look for Mesha in the east, which we may find in the district of Mesene, which is placed by Strabo at the head of the Persian Gulf. Mesene and the Written Mountain are the eastern and western limits of Arabia, which are elsewhere described as from Havilah to Shur. As this modern addition to the tenth chapter of Genesis, namely, verses 21—32, could not have been written till after the knowledge of Southern Arabia was first gained by Solomon's voyage to Ophir, and perhaps not till several centuries later, we can have no difficulty in understanding that the Holy Mountain had already been scribbled over by travellers on their pilgrimage to it, as we now know it to have been, and thus have gained its name of Mount Sephar. In Numbers xxxiii. 23, where the resting-places of the Israelites in the desert are enumerated, it is called Mount Shephar, and its modern name of Mount Serbal may even be a corruption of the same word. The writings upon the rocks from the foot of Serbal to its peak have fully identified the spot to us, while similar writings in the valley below by which it is approached have given to the neighbourhood the Arabic name of Wady Mokatteb, or the Written Valley.

Genesis i. 1: "In the beginning had God created the heavens and the earth."

This first chapter of Genesis does not contain the history of the creation of the world out of nothing. We are here told that matter had already been created "in the beginning." The past tense is here used, and the writer commences his narrative in verse 3, where, making use of the historian's tense, he proceeds to tell us how God out of this shapeless matter formed our beautiful world and its inhabitants.

2 Samuel xv. 22: "And Ittai the Gathite passed over and all his men."

The Authorized Version calls him a Gittite, but, as he and his men were natives of Gath, we cannot do wrong in neglecting the Hebrew points and making this correction here and in other places, as also in the case of the Philistine giant Goliath, whom we ought to call a Gathite. In the case of Obed-Edom the Gittite, we may leave the Authorized Version uncorrected, because as he was a Levite he was more probably a native of Gittaim, a town of Benjamin.

S. S.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

Miracles the Credentials of the Christ: Five Lectures, delivered in the Church of the Messiah, Birmingham, on Sunday Mornings in January and February, 1863. By Samuel Bache, Minister of the Congregation. 12mo. Pp. 90. Whitfield. 1863.

It has become the habit of a class of writers, while not denying miracles, to depreciate their significance, and to discredit them as vouchers of a divine revelation. When a sincere believer in Christianity allows himself to indulge in views of this kind, he may, we think, with propriety be reminded that such a treatment of the subject, whether or not he intends it to have such an effect, materially increases the difficulties of accepting Christianity as a divine revelation. In addition to other difficulties, it throws upon the advocate of Christianity the necessity of explaining why the Almighty permitted a revelation of his will to be encumbered with a mode of attestation which perplexes instead of convincing, and which in certain cases repels rather than secures faith. The records of Christianity abound with miraculous incidents. No one has yet succeeded in separating these supernatural from the natural incidents in the life of Christ. The mythical theory of Strauss is from first to last a mere assumption, incapable of being maintained by the application to the gospel history of any accepted rule of historical criticism. This being the case, we cannot look without surprise at the indifference with which some believers treat the whole subject of miracles. If, as they say, supernatural evidence, such as the four Gospels present, is altogether unimportant, the fact is one of the greatest difficulties in

Christianity. If the New Testament is to be regarded as the basis of Christian faith, it is certain that Jesus Christ wrought miracles, and that he appealed to these *works* as proofs of the divine attestation of his mission.

Whatever may be the believer's à-priori notions respecting the attesting value of miracles, he has them in the records of the life of Christ, and he must explain why it is they are there. The old theory which satisfied the minds of Paley, Watson, Channing and like-minded writers, gave a consistent and satisfactory explanation. Mr. Bache accords with their view of the subject. In these five Lectures, prepared for the instruction of the members of his congregation, and now published for their benefit and that of the public, he gives good and valid reasons for continuing to regard miracles as fit credentials of the Christ. He has presented the subject in a singularly clear, logical and convincing light.

We are able in nearly his own language to give a summary of the contents of these Lectures.

"(1.) A Miracle is a Divine Credential to a Teacher as immediately from God:—no mere marvel or prodigy or novelty of Divine power.

"(2.) The Gospels which contain the record of the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, have the record of his Miracles so interwoven with that of his teachings as to constitute one and the same indivisible texture. The doctrine cannot be separated from the miracles: and these Miracles were so various in themselves and in the circumstances under which they were wrought, yet so uniformly efficient for their contemplated results, that all supposition of artifice or fraud is entirely precluded.

"(3.) The record of both the teachings and miracles of Jesus Christ is a record of events by which Christianity was introduced and established in the world in direct opposition to the principles, expectations, and habits which then universally prevailed, not in legendary but *in historical times*; and has within itself innumerable congruities, designed and undesigned, with its own several parts, and with other authentic historical records. The legendary marvels of ages and nations that had no literature, cannot, therefore, be reasonably brought into comparison with the Gospel miracles—nor on the other hand the miracles alleged to have been wrought in confirmation of the authority of any faith already established. Both these conditions are in contrast, not in harmony, with the conditions of the miracles recorded in our Gospels. The record of Miracles in our Gospels cannot be explained as an exaggerated narrative of ordinary events, or as a myth or fable, or as simply a figurative representation of spiritual truth: neither of these assumptions being at all consistent with the occasions or the results of the Miracles as exhibited in the same record.

"(4.) For the very reason that the Miracles recorded in the Gospels *did* effect the introduction and establishment of Christianity in the world, they fully accomplished the one only purpose for which they were wrought, and therefore no such special interpositions are to be expected now.

"(5.) Such direct and striking manifestations of the Divine providence and will might be reasonably expected from our Father in Heaven to give us assurance of his love. They are necessary to the vindication of the character of Christ; and, finally, necessary to our own faith in spiritual and eternal realities.

"To deny, therefore, that the Miracles recorded in the Gospels have ever been wrought, is to repudiate the divine mission and authority of Jesus as the Christ; to repudiate his revelation of the God 'whom no man hath seen or can see;' to repudiate the concurrent testimony of history and civilization to the Gospel as 'the great power of God,' commencing its manifestation in the world some eighteen centuries ago; and to repudiate the *sure and certain* hope

of life everlasting. It signifies not at all what were the actual teachings of Jesus considered by themselves. If they stand on no higher level than those of the heathen philosophers, we are still in the darkness of heathenism; and in the same sense in which it was truly written of the Gentiles of old, are 'strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.' (Ephesians ii. 12.) So far are the Miracles of the Gospel, therefore, from being fables or metaphors, that they are the very *testimony* which God has given to the mission of his Son, and which all consistent disciples of his Son *must*, in my judgment, receive."—Pp. 88—90.

There is one inconvenience in considering the subject of Miracles apart from that of the evidences of Christianity generally. They are in reality only one out of several forms of evidence of a divine mission. There are minds to which the internal evidences of Christianity will present a result beyond which nothing is desired. So long as there is faith in the gospel as a divine revelation, it is neither necessary nor wise to insist on the exclusive reception of any particular form of evidence. The illustrious Rammohun Roy, when explaining to a circle of Christian friends of various modes of faith, some of them men of high culture and literary repute, said, in our hearing,—“I had been brought up in a religion so abounding in marvellous legends, that the miracles of Jesus did not win my faith. But the character of the religion itself, and especially the character of Jesus Christ, so infinitely superior to anything the Hindoo religion taught or ever developed, won my faith. I became a Christian, and then I accepted the miracles.” There was sound logic as well as pious feeling in this. The example is worth the thoughtful attention of others who accept the morality of the gospel, and its illustration in the life of Jesus Christ, as the foundation of their faith.

But there is one important branch of the internal evidences which grows directly out of the miracles. The character and scope of the miracles recorded in the four Gospels differ widely from other miraculous records, the difference being precisely such as the morality and theology of the gospel would lead us to expect. They are uniformly wise in their conception and benevolent in their spirit. They breathe a gentle and humane spirit. They are such *works* as became the “Son of Man” when proclaiming the merciful attributes of our Father in heaven.

We must not part with the little volume which has called forth these remarks without a cordial recommendation of it to all classes of readers. Few will read it without learning from it important truth.

Unitarian Heresy, as it is represented and as it is; including Remarks on Mis-statements of the Very Rev. Dr. Hook, Dean of Chichester. By G. Vance Smith, B.A., Ph.D., Minister of St. Saviourgate Chapel, York. Pp. 28. London—Whitfield.

THERE is in this lecture much that is well calculated to instruct both Unitarians and others as to the history of our churches, and the way in which Unitarianism has emerged out of the free system of English Presbyterianism. Dr. Smith has taken Dr. Hook, the Dean of Chichester, in hand, and exposed with the severity which the occasion required the insolent mode in which some High-churchmen allow themselves to speak of those whom their Church denounces as heretics. This is Dr. Hook's definition:

“Unitarian is a title which certain heretics, who do not worship the true

God, assume most unfairly, to convey the impression that those who worship the One and only God, do not hold the doctrine of the Divine Unity. Christians worship the Trinity in Unity, and the Unity in Trinity."

"In this definition," remarks Dr. Smith, "you have the popular prejudice about Unitarians expressed in a very gross form; by a man, too, of acknowledged intelligence and learning. He is not, however, I must say, so far as this explanation is concerned, a man of accuracy, or of justice; not even, I fear, of strict truth. The utmost that can be said for him is, that prejudice has blinded his eyes, and made him here write what is little better than calumnious."—Pp. 6, 7.

In what follows Dr. Smith substantiates this grave charge against the Dean of Chichester.

OBITUARY.

July 1, at his house, Clarence Terrace, Regent's Park, THOMAS GIBSON, Esq. He was born in the neighbourhood of London in the year 1777, and had consequently at the time of his death reached the great age of nearly 86 years. Gifted with a clear and vigorous understanding, and with a moral sense which made him shrink from everything untrue and hollow, he took in early youth a step which marked the strength of his character. His parents were orthodox Dissenters, attached to the doctrines and accustomed to the worship of the Calvinistic church. His understanding and his feelings revolted at a very early period of his life from the creed and worship of his parents. When little more than fifteen years of age, he accompanied an elder brother to hear Dr. Priestley, then recently elected the pastor of the Gravel-Pit congregation at Hackney, and he was so deeply impressed that he joined the congregation. The instructions of Dr. Priestley, both from the pulpit and in the class-room, made an ineffaceable impression on the clear and honest mind of the young convert. Of Dr. Priestley, and of his successor Mr. Belsham, he ever spoke with respectful gratitude. With the latter he cultivated for a long series of years the closest friendship, and eventually undertook the duties of executor of his will. In an admirable memoir of Mr. Gibson, printed in the *Inquirer*, it is well said—"Mr. Gibson's opinions on controverted points of theology were mainly in accordance with those of Dr. Priestley and Mr. Belsham. But of no one could it be more truly affirmed that he took no opinions on trust, and accepted no warrant but that of his own free judgment. He was in every sense an independent and consequential

thinker. His faith in the great vital truths of Christianity as a divinely-attested religion, in a personal God, in a righteous moral government, in the final tendency of all things to universal good, and in the immortality of man, was firm and unwavering, and mingled with increasing tenderness of sentiment as he descended into the vale of years. For much of the mysticism and hazy speculation of the present day he never failed to express his contempt. He would often remark, 'If a man knows what he means to say, he can always make himself understood; and if he writes unintelligibly, it is either from design or from ignorance.'

Throughout life Mr. Gibson was a firm and able supporter of the rational and scriptural faith which he had deliberately adopted. He filled several offices connected with the Unitarian Fund and the Unitarian Association, giving zealous support to the plans of the late Rev. Robt. Aspland, of whose ministry he was for a considerable time an attendant, and with whom he reciprocated the sentiment of friendship. Mr. Gibson on more than one occasion gave public expression through the press to his religious opinions. In the *Monthly Repository* he appeared as the advocate of liberal opinions on the subject of Justification against Dr. Pye Smith. A passage from one of Mr. Gibson's letters will illustrate his mental vigour. He is speaking of the opinions that God will hereafter deal with mankind according to the principles of strict equity; that all who habitually attend to the obligations of virtue will be made happy; that none will be excluded; and that in appointing to all men their future condition, due allowance will be made for the circumstances of their present

lives and for the deficiency of their moral cultivation resulting from them; and he thus proceeds: "To these opinions I heartily subscribe; to this statement I devoutly respond, Amen. I have confidence in them because they are in agreement with the tenor of the New Testament, and because they are in entire unison with the best and most delightful feelings we entertain towards the Great and Bountiful Creator, whether derived from revelation or from the exercise of the understanding directed and illuminated by the light of revealed religion. They teach that God has promised to mankind a future and an everlasting life, and that He will adapt the future condition of every individual to that character which has been the result of this first stage of his existence. And as I feel the highest moral certainty that everything is from God and of God, and that God is Love, I have no hesitation in the conclusion that ultimately all will be well with every creature He has destined for immortality."

Mr. Gibson was also an able and unswerving friend of liberal politics as well as of liberal views in theology. He watched with an intelligent interest the growth of the modern science of political economy. Few men understood it better, and as a Magistrate and the Chairman of an important Board of Guardians he had many opportunities of applying and testing the principles of political science. The long series of years through which his life extended were marked by extraordinary changes and improvements. When he first became an observer of public affairs, many of the nations of Europe were still in bondage to antiquated and feudal customs. Most of these he saw scattered to the winds by the influence of the French revolution. From that time it was his privilege to behold the gradual, though not always uninterrupted, progress of the principles of representative government and popular freedom. In the maturity of life he had the happiness to behold the wise and generous principles which in his youth he had adopted carried into the legislation and government of his country. When, in addition to this source of happiness, it is remembered that the life of this venerable man was contemporary with the discovery and application of the gigantic powers of the steam-engine and its wonderful results, and also with other material inventions which affect our life day by day and are changing the whole aspect of society, we cannot but recognize the great privileges of his lot.

To his other sources of happiness he added a cheerful temper and all the blessings which flow from a kind and well-disposed heart. Gifted with a commanding form and with almost uninterrupted health, he was permitted to pass into extreme age still preserving, and almost to the last hour, the use of his bodily senses and his intellectual faculties.

His integrity and commercial industry won for him the advantages of wealth equal to all his wants and an eminently respectable social position. He was too wise a man to sacrifice to ambition of any kind the serene happiness of domestic peace and the tranquil pleasures which are in the reach of a cultivated mind.

On the Sunday following the interment of his remains in the ground of the Unitarian church at Hackney, the minister, addressing many who well remembered Mr. Gibson as a fellow-worshiper and respected the manly attributes of his character, spoke of him in terms which were felt to be strictly just, and said in conclusion: "In bidding adieu to such a man, taken from us in the fulness both of his days and his character, whatever emotions of sorrowful remembrance may affect us, we will shed no bitter tears, we will utter no sound of discontent. We will rather offer to the Great Giver of good our thanksgiving that our departed friend was so long permitted to use and to enjoy life. We resign him to God with a well-assured hope that he is gone to his reward. 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.'"

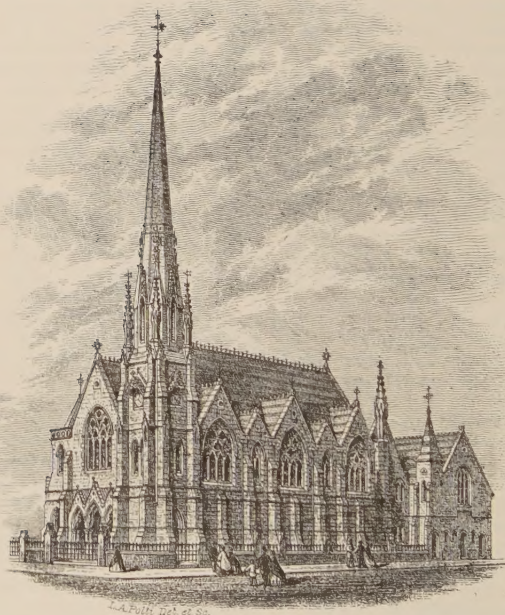
May 9, at Denmark Hill, aged 3 years and 5 months, **EAGLES BRADY**, the seventh child of Richard Andrew and Augusta Sophia **MARSDEN**.

June 1, at Pussilava, Ceylon, in the 35th year of his age, **JOHN**, son of Mr. Enoch **ARMITAGE**, of Ashton-under-Lyne.

June 14, at Bridgwater, aged ten months, **BESSIE**, the second daughter of the Rev. Thomas **HOLLAND**.

July 12, at the house of her brother, Mr. G. P. Hinton, York Buildings, Kingsdown, Bristol, **PRISCILLA**, widow of Henry **BINGHAM**, Esq., barrister-at-law.

July 16, at the residence of her brother-in-law, John Shuttleworth, Esq., Wilton Polygon, Cheetham Hill, Manchester, aged 58 years, Miss **JANE NOBLE**.



Church of the Messiah.

BIRMINGHAM.